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THE

HEALTH OF THE HEATH

A ROMANCE

IN THE HISTORY OF THE

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1851

THE
HEATHENS OF THE HEATH.

A ROMANCE,
INSTRUCTIVE, ABSORBING, THRILLING.

BY WILLIAM McDONNELL,
AUTHOR OF EXETER HALL, ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE.

OWING to the great success attending the publication of "EXETER HALL"—a theological romance, now entering its fourth edition--and moved by what I believe to be a marked necessity of the times, I have been induced to pen the following pages, and to lay them also before the liberal and intelligent reader.

The work having been written under some difficulties, at various times and in various places, it is to be hoped, that whatever criticism may be bestowed upon it shall be in a spirit as generous as it is just, and that it may be always borne in mind, that, in giving these pages to the world, the disenthralment of his fellow men from degrading usages, prejudices and beliefs has been the sole object of

THE AUTHOR.

LINDSAY,

Ontario, Canada,

September, 1871.

PRELUD

THE BEATHENS OF THE HEATH

CHAPTER I.

THE BEATHENS

IN the waning light the old church rose with its tall
spire above the autumnal trees and the garden
over which stood proudly erect and towered the tower of
northward this by which it was situated. The road led
away towards the fine towered structure, and now
inaccessible is the causeway; it gave no indication of the
waiting passage, and from its elevated position in the middle
of the hill it looked towards the surrounding country on the
south, as it instantly within the gradual descent
of the distant hills.
How many a student had here passed the day
in contemplation of that old church and its tower, and the
monks who had here been swept away from the first
hour of the English Church were buried in the earth.
It was a venerable life that seemed to him the best.
with antiquity. For the last two or three hundred years
each had been wondering at the great age; it appeared to
have gradually risen from the earth and soil and verdure
and as the mysterious up-growth of plants to the
receded the traces of time in order to mark one more
spot in which nature and society took of men and
other things, and of the life, to explain the

THE HEATHENS OF THE HEATH.

CHAPTER I.

PENDELL CHURCH.

IN the waning light the old church rose with its ivied drapery above the surrounding trees, and its ancient tower still stood proudly erect, as if to over-top the range of northern hills by which it was sheltered. The iron bird long perched over the same turreted structure, was now immovable in the calm sky; it gave no indication to the waiting mariner, and from its elevated pivot in the motionless air, it looked towards the slumbering ocean on the south, as if intently watching the gradual disappearance of some distant sail.

How many centuries must have passed since the deep foundations of that old grey edifice were laid; how many generations must have been swept away since the first huge stones of Pendell Church were buried in the earth! It was a venerable pile that seemed to link the present with antiquity. For the last two or three hundred years men had been wondering at its great age; it appeared to have gradually risen from the enriched soil and verdant surface, and as the mysterious up-growth of piety, to have escaped the ravages of time, in order to mark one sacred spot to which various and successive races of men had come, through emotions of love or fear, to exhibit forms

of faith and worship in song of praise or bloody sacrifice; and stout buttress, massive wall, and lofty tower, still clutched the solid earth, as if determined that their union should last forever.

What a strange, strange history has this Pendell sanctuary; what varied scenes, what dark intrigues, what holy strife, and what sad events were enacted within and around its very walls! Yet there it stood, the mute record of life and death; and from that same sad record tales of sorrow and rejoicing, and of revenge and blood, were told by mossy rock or at the winter fireside, by old men who had heard the same legends from their grandfathers; and traditions of superstition, intolerance and devastation, were related as incidents of that same dark history.

These singular traditions taught also, that, long before Druidical worship was known in Britain, certain missionary tribes from a remote land,—from India, from Egypt, or from Persia,—had erected huge stones around the very site of Pendell church, and its enclosed graveyard; and the space that was now nearly covered with mossy, crumbling tombs, and with graves almost hidden in the long, rank grass, was, perhaps, once included in the “sacred circle,” within which religion was inculcated by strange, mysterious ceremonies, either in worship of the triad of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, or of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, or by the Persian or the Parsee, while bowing before the effulgent Sun in adoration of the great Ormuzd; and then in the course of time, when these and other deities had been superseded, Woden and Thor had here their votaries; and here, too, beneath the shadow of some ancient oak, once stood the Druidical altar, its white-robed priest and his devout attendants.

Though the idea of a supreme power, or of a future state, has not been universal, yet, from the beginning, from our earliest knowledge of the remote past, we find that man, in almost every clime, has been a worshiper. With rare exceptions, almost every tribe or nation has paid homage to some great superior, either real or fancied.

Some have seen the placid smile of deity in the early sun-beam; others have trembled to hear his angry voice in the midnight tempest; but man's noblest emotions have over been awakened while acting in submission to that controlling power which his imagination has depicted as being the most beneficent. A compassionate deity has always been more beloved than the Omnipotence which has been represented as jealous and revengeful; and if man truly "paints himself in his god," the liberality or intolerance of a people may be assumed according to the character of the deity they are known to reverence.

The first simple worshipers at Pendell, in the fulness of their gratitude, gathered the most beautiful flowers, which they might have fancied as being the plumage of angels wings, and presented them as a thanks offering to their kind genii; others brought forth the rich, ripe fruit to Budha, or to Isis; while suppliants to a deity more stern and exacting, offered their weapons and their animals; and frantic votaries, eager to propitiate some incensed god, lacerated their own flesh, or shed the blood of the human victim, or bade the mother give her infant to the flames; and when it was considered urgent to appease the anger of a furious deity, holocausts of human beings were remorselessly offered.

But then, with the flight of time, the gods of India and Egypt, and Persia, were forsaken, and on came the conquering Roman into Britain with his chief divinities, and with his Lares and Penates. He gradually undermined the Druidical altar, and erected the statue of Jupiter; and then, long after the ancient Celtic worship had been set aside, as connected with the national faith, Constantine came and dethroned the Roman gods; he brought back the cross, a symbol which had been venerated by the nations of antiquity; he compromised with the heathen: much of the creeds and many of the rites of paganism were incorporated into the new faith, and in time, after the statue of Jupiter at Rome had been pontifically blessed and metamorphosed by the Church into the veritable statue of

the apostolic Peter, many of the great old standing stones of the "sacred circle," or "giants' dance," at Pendell, were tumbled down to form the foundation of its venerable Christian sanctuary.

Now in the soft eve, while the red light faintly lingers in the west, while there is a hush on earth for departing day, and a calm in heaven as the vesper star appears; now when the feelings are subdued and solemnized, let imagination bring back some of the scenes and characters connected with the old church of Pendell. Though centuries have passed, it seems but yesterday since there was here seen a grand procession of priests, monks, and other votaries, headed by mitred bishops and lofty dignitaries. They came to consecrate this building, erected in place of the primitive, wooden cathedral built by the semi-pagans of the early Saxon times; to bless the earth destined to receive the bodies of the deceased faithful, and to anathematize the incorrigible who still remained outside the pale of the true church. The simplicity of paganism, and of the primitive form of Christian worship, had been gradually eclipsed by a brilliant and ostentatious ceremonial, and here was a religious display in keeping with the increasing power and assumption of the priests of the new national faith. Onward moved the mitred ecclesiastics; crosses and crosiers, and spangled vestments glitter in the sunlight, and the silver censors flash in the clear air as they are swung to send out the fragrant incense; strains of music reach the ear, and as the procession, in all its religious pomp, winds slowly around the sacred edifice, a hundred devotees kneel on each side of the advancing dignitaries, while a crowd of others follow in the attitude of humble reverence.

The grand circuit is thrice made; the ground, oft moistened with the blood of religious victims, has now been sprinkled only with the sacred water of the church. The procession re-enters the building, but all do not follow. Some from the crowd hurry off to a little distance, from which, perhaps, to view another ceremony—there is to be

another. Over a hundred years before that time, when barbarous Saxon priests met here to dedicate the first rude Christian church in the Pendell valley, the religious instinct of the period led them to require a sacrifice, and one of the remaining Pagan priests of Britain was piously slaughtered, as a peace offering, a short way beyond the Christian altar. Alas! that that sacrificial instinct, so foreign to humanity, should have become hereditary in the Christian Church!

Again the procession moves out slowly from the building; it is now headed by a score of tonsured monks with bare feet. Their coarse gowns are tied around the waist by a kind of rope; each monk holds a small wooden cross, and between the two stout brethren in advance there limps a decrepid man whom they are leading towards that great lone standing stone near the highway. The old man is one of the irreclaimable children of Abraham; he believes only in Moses and the prophets—not in Christ. Though hated and despised, one more chance of recantation had been offered him by the mercy of the Church, but he was true to the tradition of his fathers—that offer had been rejected; and, now, as one of the polluted race, he is decreed unworthy of life. See! they have chained him to the great stone; the sturdy monks pile up the fagots that seem to thirst for flame. The mitred bishops and the priests and their pliant followers stand reproachfully before him, and while the grey-haired Jew is terrified by curses and denunciations, he is told to kiss the cross which is held towards him. The old man is weeping, but that cross is an idol to him, and he turns aside his head.* A resolute monk thrusts it into the victim's mouth; the tears and blood of the old man mingle, but none can pity. In fierce haste the torch is applied, and as the flames leap up, the shouts and imprecations of the furious crowd drown the groans of the feeble sufferer.

In a few minutes more the last anathema is uttered, and

* Giordano Bruno who was burnt by the Dominicans at Rome, refused to kiss a crucifix held out to him for that purpose.

while the monks remain to feed the flames, and prevent any chance of rescue, bishops, priests and people return to the church. A number of sacred relics are to be enshrined—a piece of the true cross, a nail, the beard of an apostle, and the bones of a martyr, are displayed before the wondering faithful, and then deposited. The fragrant incense enters the silver shrine, and again clouds the lighted altar; a *Te Deum* is sung, the benediction is pronounced, and the consecration of Pendell church is completed.*

* The veneration for relics in the Church of Rome is, among many of its adherents, as great as ever. The following extract is from a Canadian paper, dated Sept. 22d, 1873.

"RELICS FOR ST. MICHAEL'S CATHEDRAL.—An unusual event took place yesterday afternoon in St. Michael's Cathedral, being the deposition of certain relics under one of the altars. The remains are reputed to be those of Saint Victor, one of 10,203 soldiers of the Emperor Diocletian, and commanded by Saint Zeno. These soldiers refused to sacrifice to the gods of heathen Rome, and were put to death, after forced labor at the Baths of Diocletian for seven years. The bodies were buried at Tre Fontani, where it is believed St. Paul had suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Nero. His Grace, the Archbishop, while on his late visit to Rome, procured these remains to be placed under an altar in the Cathedral for the veneration of the Catholics. The relics were beautifully encased in wax. A solemn procession was formed in the garden, the body of the martyr being borne by a train of the clergy in full ecclesiastical vestments, and by them deposited in its resting place. After vespers a brief history of the life of this Saint was given by the Rev. Archdeacon, and the ceremony closed with the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament."

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIAN HARMONY.

IN past times when the Church was all powerful, when it might be said there was but one true church in all Christendom, when no important disputes occurred on doctrinal points, although loud and bitter discussions took place on the grave question of how priests and monks should shave their heads, or wear the tonsure, then not more than one book might be found in a parish, or not more than one man who could read it; then, many prelates could not even write, and priests, and monks, and friars roamed as beggars, or as robbers through a hungry land. Nearly all of the baptized faithful—slaves or free-men—then grew up to be ignorant, brutal, and ferocious; and then the legitimate business of kings seemed to be but wanton rapine or murder. Then, Christian nations were most faithless, and Christian men and women were most faithless; and then Christian priests were most numerous; and, though not licensed to shed human blood, yet might follow armies, and stalk through the battle field, and with iron headed mace dash out the brains of wounded enemies; and then, also, for the commission of even petty offences, gashed and mutilated creatures could be found almost helpless in every corner of the land. In these dark times what was the restraining influence of the true church? Amid all the piety and terror when oppression was the rule, there was the added terror of invasion. Shortly after the consecration at Pendell, the

warlike Danes came and almost destroyed its sanctuary. The abbot was slain on its altar steps, and monks lay bleeding and dead in and around the building. The Danes returned once more to renew their acts of spoliation and sacrilege. They again plundered this church, slaughtered its cowed monks, and robbed and burned their monastery; and Danish and Saxon priests long continued in fierce and bloody struggles for secular and ecclesiastical possession; and when, after many years of brutal strife, the great Saxon revenge was taken on St. Brice's day, Danes lay murdered around the altar of this very church, in which they had sought refuge.

Then there was another invasion; the Norman came, and Norman prelates, backed by victorious hordes, deprived Saxon bishops of their power; and heedless of a common faith, or of clerical rights, they assumed jurisdiction over the spiritual and temporal resources of each diocese. The monastery, which had been restored, and which once stood near this old church, was then occupied by Benedictine monks who claimed to be exempt from canonical obedience to the foreign ordinary, and who resisted the prelatial authority of the rapacious Norman. But the priestly invader knew his power, and would not yield his spiritual plunder. Appeals to Rome were completely ineffectual, and after much fierce contention between bishop and monk, the abbot was rudely deposed by the stranger. But the monks had their own revenge. The Norman prelate was slain at midnight at the entrance of the sanctuary, and his body long lay, among others of the consecrated dead, in one of the many stone coffins, the lids of which could be seen level with the tiled floor of Pendell church.

Here came Peter the hermit on his rounds, and here his voice was heard invoking aid for the Crusaders, denouncing the Saracens, and praying for the delivery of Jerusalem; and here within this church, many a candidate for knighthood kept his lonely midnight vigil, over the armor that was to protect him, as one of the soldiers of the Cross, in distant Palestine. Alas! how many of these deluded

champions left their bones to bleach and crumble upon the arid plains of Judea! There were other scenes; here too, time after time, the faithful were amazed by wondrous miracles performed by some noted Dunstan; and by way of change, monks performed scriptural plays, and lashed the representative of Judas around the altar, to the great delight of credulous and edified spectators. Here, again, when one of Wickliffe's wandering disciples recklessly dared to broach his heresy, there was a furious commotion. The indignant priests clamored against the outrage on the ancient Faith; the common doom of early innovators followed, and the fanatical Lollard lost his life.

After those days there were troublous times. One of the detestable usurpers whose reign, like that of others in Britain, was but a pestilence, fancied himself almost free to govern England without even being subject to the usual dictation of the overshadowing power of Rome. But pontifical thunder was quickly heard. Pope Innocent issued his interdict, and for six dreary years the enduring subjects of king John were deprived of almost every religious rite. While the English despot defied and feasted, and while priests had a long holiday, the poor, suffering people alone felt the punishment. No church bell tolled, no mass was heard, no altar, or cross, or sacred image could be seen, no man might shave his beard or salute his neighbor; the dead were refused consecrated ground, and were tumbled, without a prayer, into ditches, hidden in fields, or covered up along the highways. Every place of worship in the kingdom was closed, and nothing in human shape could be found in Pendell church, except the dead monks that were stretched in rows down in its gloomy vaults.

But who, in those days, could withstand the anger of the Roman pontiff? The craven king became submissive, resigned his kingdom, and acknowledged himself the vassal of the Holy See. Nothing less would satisfy God's viceregent. For such considerations the Church could always relent, and receive back into its bosom the most

desperate transgressor. Yet, though the Church was in plenitude of its power, there was alarming wickedness in the land. The nation seemed debauched, and for years the moral laxity of priest and layman was almost overlooked in the prevailing depravity of the times; even the Church itself became infected, and, for about forty years, rival pontiffs denounced and anathematized one another, either from Rome or from Rimini, from Arragon or from Avignon. However, after a long period of destruction, Religion found a special remedy for the increased transgressions of the times. There was a mountain of iniquity to be removed, for which it seems the ordinary means at the disposal of the church were considered insufficient; a more effective spiritual aid was required, and Tetzal was sent forth to proclaim the potency of indulgences, and to offer pardon and purity by the simple purchase of these restoratives. The man who swore, or the man who stole, he who robbed, or he who cut a throat, knew the exact price which could free him from the taint of guilt; and the sale of these indulgences was announced also from the altar at Pendell.*

Then, during the progress of the Reformation what changes took place. There was great commotion in the land; there were fierce discussions, and nowhere was Luther more heartily execrated than here. Soon after, there were religious riots and bloodshed, and in the hurry which followed, priests and monks had to flee from this place; and pliant pastors took possession, though scenes of the wildest strife were still witnessed in the house of the Lord. Much damage was done to the building; the altar was pulled down, images were defaced, and relics scattered about; and when the voluptuous Defender of the Faith had full sway, many of those who could not acknowledge his spiritual supremacy, and many who believed with Luther, or who believed in the Pope, were by the merest

* For ninety livres, or about half a guinea, English money, a pardon could be purchased for the murder of a father, a mother, or a wife.

whim of a pious tyrant, made amenable to the "Bloody Statute," and orthodox and heterodox alike, were often led together to the stake or halter, almost under the shadow of this Christian temple.

During these eventful times, the greatest crime of which a man could be guilty, or at least that which was most certain to ensure the penalty of death, was his belief or disbelief in certain religious doctrines. In one reign a man must abjure the Pope and the Real Presence, in the next he must believe in the Mass and in transubstantiation, and the facility with which prelates, priests, and people altered their opinions on such subjects to suit a fanatical sovereign, was evidence sufficient to lead to the conclusion that had a doltish monarch proclaimed his faith in Mahomet, five-sixths of his servile subjects would have trampled on the cross and kissed the crescent. Cranmer, the archbishop, was noted for his instability, and for his ready adoption of extreme doctrinal points; but the reasoning few who dared to have a creed of their own, were certain to be doomed—even recantation could not always save. The religious teachers of the period, Romish or Protestant, knew no pity. Intolerance was triumphant; the taint of heresy was the very shadow of death.

However, when another change in the national faith had been effected; when, after many struggles and reverses, the new church, with its royal head, its zealous bishops, its sequestered estates, its princely income, and its assured tithes, had been established; when the possession of rich cathedrals and churches, and other Popish forfeitures, had been secured; when Popish prayers and Popish liturgies had been sufficiently diluted; and when these, with a simplified ritual, were considered adequate to secure for all—at least for the pastors—a ready passport to Paradise, still many pious believers were restless; greater purity and simplicity in faith and worship they thought should yet be attained, and when texts could not convince, the torch and the sword, as of old, were the aids often most relied on to propagate new doctrines when other modes of persua-

sion had failed. At this time some differences of opinion which had existed among priests, monks, and friars of the Roman church were almost forgotten; the deluge of schism appalled the stoutest champions of the older creed, and, while taking refuge in the Pontifical ark, they watched the rising waters, until the mighty turbid flood burst its bounds, and in torrents, rushed off madly in every direction, and almost every way-mark of the "Mother Church" was swept away, and there appeared to them but one scene of wildness and moral desolation.

Soon after a horde of sects had sprung up, each claiming to be the exponent of Truth; and each ready to persecute the other. The Roman church had been despotic—the Reformed church could scarcely tolerate. Luther threatened persecution; Calvin did persecute. A Protestant parliament persecuted Catholics; and priests and Jesuits had to flee for their lives, and public rewards were offered for their discovery. Prelacy was attacked by Presbyterians, and Presbyterians by Independents; and Cromwell's Roundheads rushed through the land praying and slaying; and here at Pendell they cut down many enemies of the Lord. They also tore down every remaining relic of Popery and Episcopacy, and, while wiping their blood stained swords, they shouted hosannas and sung psalms in this old sanctuary.

But these wild times have passed. After Cromwell's body had been dug up and dishonored by a pious king, the Church by law established, calmly prospered under the smile of royal favor; and if it has had to deal occasionally in a summary manner with recusants, and dissenting teachers, it must no doubt have been out of the purest motives for the extension of the true faith. The Church has had a long era of prosperity; it has been singularly blest, that is if vast wealth is emblematic of blessedness—and if its learned bishops have not all been endowed with spiritual gifts, they have, one and all, secured those temporal favors which enable them to be more devoted to their high calling; proving to scoffers that godliness is

great gain, and that the feet of those who bring glad tidings are ever "beautiful upon the mountains"

Grey old structure! still firm upon the earth, thou art little changed by years—yet what changes have taken place around thee! What great and what sad events have happened here; and what great ceremonies, great excommunications, great marriages, and great funerals! What shall future changes bring? Shall there be a gradual relapse to Brahma, or an advance to Reason? Thy tonsured priests and monks have passed away; even their very bones have not been left thee. No vesper bell is longer heard at eve, no mass or litany is sung, but strange voices and strange anthems tell of the strange creed that has almost wrought ruin to thy founders. There is an air of sadness in thy presence; yet many still hope to restore thy lighted altar, and to crown thee with thy ancient cross. These hopes may be realized, for who can tell what an ardent faith may yet accomplish?

The Pendell valley is still attractive, and, in the genial summer season, visitors and antiquaries loiter around the place, and gaze with wonder at the many huge standing stones, and at the curious mounds and barrows still to be found in the vicinity. The church, sturdy in its old age, is still the principal object in the rural picture, and even but a short time back, few ever came or went without calling at the cottage of old Sarah Afton, known to some as the Soeress; she, past her eightieth year, could relate many a weird tale of the olden time. Her great-grandfather was one of the Pendell martyrs. She could show the places where bloody deeds were done, and point to the very spot where some humble devotee, Catholic or Protestant, had died for the truth. And then she could tell startling stories of those dread times; she could also tell of how shouts, and loud cries, and shrieks of terror of ghostly combatants could be heard around the church on dark and stormy nights, when the waves lashed the rocks in Pendell bay; and how, on other nights, lights could be often seen, and voices heard in the same building; and it

was a certain fact that one or two of her nearest neighbors, coming home about midnight, heard the cocks crow, and saw a long procession of monks moving out from the church, and then march with solemn tread around the graves. And, again, she would tell of how her own sister's grandson had seen, in the bright moonlight, an ancient Druid priest up in the great oak tree near the church yard gate, and, that, with his "own two eyes," he saw him cut, with a golden knife, a mistletoe from one of the highest branches. Old Sarah Afton believes these things the more readily because of what she had seen and heard herself; and then she would lower her voice and tell how, on many and many a night, and often on nights the most tempestuous, when no living mortal was inside the old building, she had heard the church organ, now in plaintive strains, and then in wild, rushing sounds, as if to drown the thunder then heard in the stormy sky.

But now 'tis the close of day; the moon appears again peering cautiously over the summit of that distant hill. The trees are sprinkled with the silvery light; the outlines of the sanctuary are barely visible, but a halo settles upon its tower, and the shimmering ivy, like a shroud, is seen flowing down its dark sides. A luminous beam is stretching out over the sombre sea, and lone rays wander among the graves, and flicker upon the numerous white tombs. In the spreading gleam the two small tower windows shine out like flashing eyes; and the old church, almost hidden in the partial gloom, seems to crouch down among the dead, like some gluttoned monster seeking repose while surrounded by the whitened skulls and bones of its numerous victims.

CHAPTER III.

THE CURATE OF PENDELL.

IT is evening again, a summer Sabbath eve. The hills are crowned with the glory of the setting sun, and in the ruddy golden light the earth seems draped in its most resplendent attire; the day's farewell is as peaceful and attractive as the smile of a departing angel.

The Reverend David Meade, curate at Pendell, is seated in his arm chair on the lawn in front of the old parsonage. Though surrounded by the beautiful scenery of the favored valley, he seems strangely indifferent to its attractions, or they may have produced that reverie in which he indulges. Leaning his head upon his ivory-headed cane, he has been looking down for some minutes at that daisy close to his foot, and in his musing he has wandered back to youth, has been a child again at his mother's knee, has been again at school, at college, at his ordination; he again receives his appointment to a curacy, and, after his marriage and the varied scenes and trials of over forty years since that event, he finds himself, after the hasty retrospect, now, in the decline of life, still a curate—still only a poor curate at Pendell.

But why at all a churchman? Why in orders,—why a priest? Why, with all his doubts and speculations, should he be a curate? His father had been one before him, and he, like a son of Aaron, without any wish or effort on his part, had somehow drifted into the ministry—into a position which his mature judgment had told him was most

unsuitable; but after apostolic hands had been laid upon him, thinking it too late to recede, he, even contrary to his own inclination, had remained a servant of the Church, and had ever since been trying to teach or explain to others that which he sometimes felt he did not clearly understand himself. Still, at times he tried to feel assured. Had he not encouragement to submissive belief in the example of learned prelates and of other distinguished men? He strove to think that the theological opinions which they had upheld might not be so extravagant as he sometimes fancied. Any way, setting aside the mysticism of a creed, he often satisfied himself by thinking that there was a base of morality in revelation from which he could draw supplies to benefit his hearers; leaving the many perplexities of belief to semi-inspired D. D.s, and imaginative commentators. He had little difficulty, however, with his parishioners at Pendell; nearly all there, simple and gentle, were believers; hardly one among them ever harbored a doubt, or ventured a speculation as to the validity of any doctrine; they, like most others, simply believed that which they had been trained to believe from infancy; and they were, therefore, just as steadfast in the conviction that the Pope was anti-Christ, as their Catholic forefathers had been that he was the august head of the true Church.

The Reverend David Meade had been curate of Pendell for over thirty years. He was now, fortunately for himself, under a rector who, having the benefit of a large income arising, somehow, from other spiritual sources, as well as from the cure of souls at Pendell, spent much of his time either in London or Paris, or on a periodical tour to certain continental cities. Perhaps these visits might have been made by the Reverend Rector for the acquisition of greater religious knowledge, or in order to witness the various developments of faith in different countries, so as to be able, if possible, to understand why that which was called "Apostolic Truth," and which had obtained government patronage at St. Paul's in Old England, should

be denounced as rank error, and anathematized as heresy at St. Peter's in Old Rome. And then in the semi-annual visit which he made to Pendell, he could enlighten his curate in this important particular; and though rather indifferent as to what latitude might be taken in scriptural interpretation, he could see that the thirty-nine articles of the English Church, had been, at least, outwardly respected. The Reverend George Morton, as rector, was faithful in what he considered the performance of his parochial duties; his semi-annual visits were regularly paid, he seemed anxious to know how many, young or old, were prepared for the important rite of confirmation, was particular to get correct lists of marriages, baptisms, and burials, for which a fee had been given, and was rather strict as to the collection of tithes and church rates; and for these onerous duties at Pendell, or rather for these toilsome semi-annual visits, his spiritual income was over £800 sterling. But all this was not clear gain; from this amount the salary of his curate had to be deducted, and he fancied himself truly generous by consenting to increase the stipend of Mr. Meade, his journeyman parson, to £60 a year.

For a period of about fifteen years under a former rich rector, who had, it was said, "gone to his great reward," Mr. Meade, as curate, had received the annual allowance of but fifty pounds, and being simple as a child in money matters, he really thought at the time, that the additional ten pounds, with free use of the old parsonage, was almost a sudden rise to affluence. He therefore gladly consented to remain as sub-pastor and spiritual overseer of the Christian flock at Pendell, and to perform his old round of duties—to preach twice on Sundays, to visit, to catechise, to marry, to baptize, to attend funerals, and to do all the clerical drudgery of the parish; and after having signed the agreement with his new spiritual superior, he hurried home to impart the joyful information to his family; and then went to receive the congratulations of his many poor friends.

About three years after his last appointment, Mr. Meade lost his faithful wife; this affliction at his age became the darkest cloud over his remaining hopes of earthly happiness, but a daughter was left him—a flower of purity and goodness—who strove to make his declining years as happy as possible. He had also a son in India. This young man, Charles Meade, who was about two years older than his sister, had been rated one of the most promising young fellows in the country, and being of an adventurous disposition, he determined, after he had left college, to see the world for himself, and try to assist his father. Had he submitted to ordination as his father had done, he could have remained in England, and might have had a curacy, and perhaps even forty pounds a year to begin with, but having the greatest aversion to the priestly trade, he refused to eke out a living by dealing in mysteries, or by assuming clerical pretensions. He might have had sufficient influence to obtain a position in the army, but he looked upon the profession of arms as barbarism, and upon so-called military glory as degrading to humanity; a situation, however, offered in a wealthy mercantile firm, and with strong hopes of success he sailed for India.

During nearly all his married life, the Reverend David Meade had to struggle with difficulties, and while it pinched him sorely to spare sufficient to pay for the education of his children, by great self-denial he even managed to secure for them accomplishments which few but the wealthy could obtain. These efforts and sacrifices on the part of himself and his wife now brought some return. His household was small, being comprised of himself, his daughter, and one old servant. Miss Esther Meade was chief controller of domestic affairs, and by her economy and wonderful management, the humble stipend of her father was made to produce home comforts not exceeded in many more pretentious establishments. She was also able to spare sufficient time to give lessons in music, French, and drawing, to the children of certain families in the parish, thereby adding to her father's little income an

amount which not only enabled her to supply several needs—even at times luxuries—for her father and herself, but also to aid many of the poor and destitute of her own neighborhood.

What a pity that poverty and human wretchedness should so often be found amid the attractive beauties of nature, making even the sunlight almost gloomy to many! What a pity that the human eye should ever give a dew drop to the flower, or that the sigh from a sad heart should waft the odor from the rose! What a pity that the view of the rich scenery of the pleasant Pendell valley should be looked at with indifference, because gaunt hunger stands like a spectre in the way. Alas! that sad spectre is too often seen, even in the glowing summer time, as if impatiently waiting for its own black season, dreary Winter, in order to take possession of many an humble dwelling.

The curate, after his Sabbath toil, was thinking of these things, and he remembered the many uncomplaining poor he had seen that day in his visits. But why, thought he, should there be poverty? why so much distress? Why, in this land of wealth and greatness, should there be one solitary instance of suffering for lack of food? The birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, have their abundance; the mountain goat finds its herbage even mid rocks and wastes; flocks luxuriate in rich valleys, and the cattle on a thousand hills grow fat. Why is it that man alone, more than any other of God's creatures, should be compelled to feel the pangs of hunger? What a shame that humanity should be thus degraded! The world contains ample stores for all; kind nature, willing to be impartial, is lavish in her dealings, and yields her gifts in rich profusion; but the fair and equitable distribution which she intended is interfered with by too many of the selfish and rapacious, and unheeded by too many of the wealthy in power. This is a violation of natural rights; for where all the children of the earth are equal inheritors, unequal distribution of the patrimony is injustice. A few, by force or by fraud, or by little or no industry, have amassed wealth, and possess

a superabundance of every comfort ; the many have mostly to exist by severe toil, and suffer great deprivation. A few monopolize the ownership of the very land, keeping large tracts unproductive ; while a vast number of persons can show no claim—unless it be that for interment—to a single foot of the soil of their native country. This is a palpable outrage on natural rights. British law, like the laws of almost every other Christian land, still defends this monopoly, and offers, as yet, no true remedy, no just restoration, for the evictions and usurpations of past days, as if time had already legalized ancient acts of robbery and spoliation ; and while Religion stands by and smiles with satisfaction at the present social arrangement, the national Church, supported by plunder, will make no effort at reform in this particular, but contented with its earthly honors and emoluments, it assumes a proud humility, and bids its destitute adherents be submissive to the decrees of Providence, and to the powers that be ; and then, by its own course, it glaringly exhibits a sad example of partiality and injustice in the treatment of its own clergy. The truly faithful pastors whose duties are the most arduous, receive as the reward of their labor scarcely sufficient for their humble support, while drones, called “ church dignifaries,” are glutted with favors, and live in luxury.

These views strongly impressed the curate at the time ; he had long felt that religion had become the trade of many unscrupulous men, who, when clothed in its garb, and uttering its prayer, had acted as if their profession—called sacred—had authorized them to ignore every principle of right. He knew that clerical arrogance and assumption, Pagan and Mohammedan, as well as Christian, had circumscribed progress and stifled many of the most generous impulses, and at the moment his memory retraced many instances of their folly.

When Manetho, the Egyptian priest and historian, was unable to believe that man alone could possibly have erected the vast pyramids, obelisks, colossal statues, and temples of the Nile, he insisted in his writings that these

amazing structures had been erected by a dynasty of gods who had been the original rulers of Egypt for about twenty-five thousand years, before human beings had become their successors.

When the Caliph Al Mamun, the cotemporary of Charlemagne, received, with distinction, at his Court at Bagdad, foreign astronomers and learned men, he encountered much opposition from the Mohammedan priests, who did not wish that faithful Moslems should ever seek for science or wisdom beyond that contained in the Koran.

When Omar, surnamed El Aalem, or the learned, wrote a geological work on the retreat of the sea, the same priests declared that his system was contradictory to certain passages in the inspired Koran; he was, therefore, called upon to make a public recantation of his supposed error, and to avoid persecution, he left Samarakand.

After Copernicus had written his great work, *De Revolutionibus Orbium Cœlestium*, proving the sun to be the centre of our system, so opposed were the priests of his time to new opinions, that he hid his manuscript for over twelve years, lest its publication should insure an anathema.

Learned Jesuit fathers of the Christian Church, so intimidated Galileo by threats and imprisonment, that he made a degrading abjuration of what he had written in favor of the Copernican system; his works were then said to be in opposition to the express word of God, and his "Dialogues" were burnt at Rome. Yet though seven cardinals signed the sentence of the Inquisition against Galileo, and though even Luther joined in the outcry against the correct theory of planetary revolution, still that theory is now accepted by science, and the name of Galileo is honored by all!

As soon as Buffon had published his "Natural History," which included his "Theory of the Earth," he was officially informed by the Faculty of Theology in Paris, that several of his propositions "were reprehensible and contrary to the creed of the Church;" and Buffon, too, was compelled

to humbly declare, that he had no intention to contradict scripture, and that he would abandon everything he had written which might be considered contrary to the law of Moses.

Newton's theory of gravitation was at first strongly opposed; he was accused of skepticism, and certain of the pious, who declaimed against human learning, maintained that "the Hebrew Scriptures, when rightly translated, comprised a perfect system of natural philosophy."

Priests had also assumed to dictate to science, and had, time after time, foolishly protested against the opinions and discoveries of enlightened investigating and ingenious men. Discovery and invention seem to have been too often looked upon by the Church as twin children of the Evil One.*

Geographical, as well as astronomical and geological knowledge or discovery, was promptly opposed or discredited whenever it came in conflict with the crude clerical notions of the age.†

When the enlightened Bavarian Bishop Virgil, before the ninth century, asserted the existence of the Antipodes, Pope Zachary, who was scandalized at the idea, sent orders to his legate, "to strip him of his priesthood, and drive him from the Church and altars of God."

Roger Bacon, the ingenious Franciscan Friar, who was

* Ecclesiastical architecture, statuary or painting—any effort which could add to the material splendor of the Church—might be indulged; but were a vigorous inventive mind inclined to go much further, suspicion was easily aroused, and the spectre of a Dominican pointing to the Inquisition, too often restrained the aspirations of genius. Darwin says; "During the same period, the Holy Inquisition selected, with extreme care, the freest and boldest men in order to burn and imprison them. In Spain alone, some of the best men, those who doubted and questioned—and without doubting and questioning there can be no progress—were eliminated during three centuries at the rate of a thousand a year." (*Descent of Man* Vol. 1, p. 171.)

† A curious clerical theory, as to the causes of the revolution of the earth, is that given by the Rev. Father Hardouin. He believed that the rotation of the earth was caused by lost souls trying to escape from the central fire of our globe; that by their climbing on the inner crust of the earth, which he asserted was the wall of hell, the world was made to revolve, as a squirrel, by climbing, turns a cage!

called by his admirers the "Doctor Mirabilis;" who dared to reprove the immoral monks and clergy of his time; who ventured to explore the secrets of nature; who was an astronomer, and who, it is said, invented spectacles, and made useful suggestions respecting the telescope and the microscope, and who made many valuable scientific discoveries; this worthy man was harrassed by clerical ignorance and jealousy; he was accused of being in league with the devil, of having sold himself to satan; his discoveries were pronounced to be the result of "hellish magic;" his great work, the *Opus Majus*, was condemned, and, by order of Pope Nicholas III., he was forbidden to teach. After useless appeals, he was thrust into prison in his old age, and was greatly worn and enfeebled by an incarceration of ten years. Soon after, when on his death-bed, he uttered these melancholy words: "I repent, now, that I have given myself so much trouble for the love of science. It is on account of the ignorance of those with whom I have to deal, that I have not been able to accomplish more."

The establishment of the Royal Society of England, was opposed because it was feared that discoveries in experimental philosophy "might be subversive of the Christian faith;" the telescope and the microscope were called "Atheistical inventions."

Dr. Jenner was denounced for his discovery of vaccination, and the pulpit proclaimed the operation as "diabolical—a tempting of God's providence, and therefore a heinous crime." Harvey's discovery of the circulation of blood was scoffed at by priests, and even by many physicians, for many years.

Dr. Franklin was charged with sacrilege for his temerity with lightning, and lightning-rods were condemned as "threatening the will of an angry God." * Men who first proposed to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, were

* Almost every church at the present day has its lightning-rod; ministers now seem to think that it is perhaps more efficacious than prayer for the preservation of the "house of God."

told "to fear the vengeance of Heaven, for attempting to improve that which the Creator, in his almighty will and Providence, has ordained from the creation of the world." Russian priests considered the project of Peter the Great, to cut a canal between the Volga and the Don, as "great impiety."

The proposal to make a certain river in Portugal navigable to the Tagus, was forbidden, because the Portuguese clergy asserted that, if it had been the will of God that the river should be navigable, he would have made it so; and when Brindley, the great engineer, appeared before a parliamentary committee in England, to urge a petition favoring the construction of canals, he was asked by one of the pious members: "Pray, sir, what do you suppose God made rivers for?" and though he calmly replied: "To feed canals," yet the petition was rejected because the Church at that day did not encourage such projects; even printing was looked upon as a hostile discovery.

How strange that clerical obstinacy should have retarded the progress of astronomy, geology, philosophy, and of almost every other moral and physical science; it is well known that the self-sufficiency of a majority of the most influential ministers has been a hinderance to social and political advancement; even in petty matters their interference has been most absurd. Not many years ago, persons who attempted to winnow corn by mechanical means were refused communion, while others were reprovved for using forks instead of fingers in the use of food; and in our own day "life assurance" has been neglected by many because it "argues a distrust in Providence."

A distinguished writer, reflecting on clerical arrogance and dictation in relation to scientific matters, says:

"Who shall number the patient and earnest seekers after truth, from the days of Galileo until now, whose lives have been embittered and their good name blasted by the mistaken zeal of bibliolaters? Who shall count the hosts of weaker men, whose sense of truth has been destroyed in the effort to harmonize impossibilities—whose

life has been wasted in the attempt to force the generous new wine of science into the old bottles of Judaism, compelled by the outcry of the same strong party? It is true, that if philosophers have suffered, their cause has been amply avenged. Extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science as the strangled snake beside that of Hercules; and history records that, whenever science and orthodoxy have been fairly opposed, the latter has been forced to retire from the lists, bleeding and crushed, if not annihilated—scotched, if not slain. But orthodoxy is the Bourbon of the world of thought. It learns not, neither can it forget; and though at present bewildered and afraid to move, it is as willing as ever to insist that the first chapter of Genesis contains the beginning and the end of sound science, and to visit with such petty thunderbolts, as its half paralyzed hands can hurl, those who refuse to degrade nature to the level of primitive Judaism.” (Huxley, Lay Sermons, p. 278.)

And another—

“For more than three centuries the decadence of theological influence has been one of the most invariable signs and measures of our progress. In medicine, physical science, commercial interests, politics, and even ethics, the reformer has been confronted with theological affirmations that have barred his way, which were all defended as of vital importance, and were all compelled to yield before the secularizing influence of civilization.” (Lecky, History of Morals, Vol. 2, p. 18.)

Such instances of interference the curate knew had been recorded as facts against pastors of the Christian Church; and he also knew that, under the influence of religion and nationality, influences which very many still deem most sacred, the most terrible woes had fallen upon the human family. What sufferings, he thought, have been endured by mankind because of their adhesion to those cherished ideas! What enormities have followed the so-called propagation of the new faith! Christianity claims to be a religion of peace, yet, what bitter discus-

sion, what fierce strife, and what sanguinary contests have followed its footsteps. The early enemies of our faith had marked the progress of the Church from an humble beginning, to wealth and power, culminating in tyranny and persecution. It had scarcely escaped from the bloody rule of a Nero or a Diocletian ere it rushed out from its gloomy hiding place in the Catacombs, greedy itself for blood; and history has borne sad evidence of the atrocities of its adherents. The Christian Church had barely emerged from its cloud of obscurity, and gained recognition by the government of the period, ere it snatched the sword and persecuted its pagan predecessors; and then there followed contention and disunion among its own upholders. It encouraged the wild crusades; it established the Inquisition in Spain, and had its Star Chamber in England. It gave a medal in commemoration of the massacre of St. Bartholomew; and conferred rank upon those who slaughtered Papists in Ireland. In Rome it was a fury, in England a despot, in almost every nation under its sway, a fierce, vindictive tyrant. It has ever claimed to be the spirit of order, progress and intelligence, yet strange to learn, the long period—the centuries of its most unlimited control—a period of moral and intellectual degeneracy—is known to all as the “dark ages.” Before, as well as after the Reformation, the Church was implacable against unlimited freedom of thought, and even now, in more enlightened times, should Reason offer the most humble suggestion, contradictory to the mysteries of Faith, a host of its ordained exponents will consign Reason to infamy; as if truth in any form could be eclipsed by doubt, or overcome by argument. Why should this be? Why is it that creeds tend to make priests arrogant, and men servile; and why should ideas of intolerance and persecution relate almost solely to religious or speculative belief? The Church assumes to teach humility, yet it is ever eager for power; it denounces worldliness, though insatiable for wealth; it preaches peace, while being, perhaps, the active and principal cause of the most desperate wars—its inconsistencies

are innumerable. This was the curate's train of thought at the time, and though he had often had his own peculiar doubts, and fancied he had discovered many discrepancies in word and in doctrine, yet he would try to reconcile all; he would even plead with himself for the Church. In his darkest hours he had often been solaced by the teachings of immortality and future bliss. There might be errors in its doctrine, discrepancies in its scriptures, and useless formality in its ritual; but after all there was something ennobling in its example; something sterling in its precepts; something tender and beautiful in its solemn prayers and liturgies; and something estatic and divine in its promises of reward. It had been the gate of Heaven to many a poor humble soul who had found the world unkind, and to a host of the simple and unlearned it had smoothed the passage to the grave.

But then, again, thought he in his wavering, why have so many of the educated and intelligent grown so indifferent to religion? Why is skepticism on the increase, boldly challenging discussion? Alas! the curate felt that he himself had too often wavered in his faith, that his belief was uncertain, that he had passed years in irresolution, regretting that he had ever entered the Church as a pastor, and that he had often and often wished and prayed for a means of living more in accord with his own ideas of usefulness. He looked back upon those years as a bleak period of doubt and perplexity, and he fancied that had he been placed in a different position he might have had a larger field for liberty of thought and action; but like Prometheus he had been chained to a rock—he had been bound to a creed, and dared not openly speculate beyond it.

As he thus sat thinking, there was an expression of sadness upon his intellectual face, and his mild grey eye still rested upon the green sward. He looked up, the sunlight had departed, and the solemn gloom of night was soon to rest upon the old church tower; he felt that the evening of his own life would soon draw to a close. And now came

the great regret, that for want of determination, for the want of that true courage which the genuine in nobility and heroism alone possess, his efforts in the cause of progress had been sadly circumscribed. Though still in comparative health and vigor, the grey hairs of age had come, and he soon might have its palsied hand and its faltering step; it was too late now to enter upon a different mission—he must leave his task unfinished. He thought of this with regret—with remorse. And brooding alone over this in the deepening shadows, there he still sat, sighing at seventy, sadly sighing that the summer of his life had been wasted away.

CHAPTER IV.

ESTHER MEADE.

SHE was looking at the ocean in its grandeur, at the summer sea, at another dawn upon the great waste of waters. How glorious in its immensity! There it lay, the mysterious deep—a picture of the illimitable—in its most complacent mood, gently heaving beneath the timid light of the early day, while flashes of purple and gold glanced far and near over its broad azure bosom. As yet the outlines of the distant coast were barely visible; the dim grey mountain afar seemed to rise up like a lone pyramid in the great desert; the island, still beyond, rested like some æriel creation upon the slumbering waves, and then, soon as the sun's broad shafts, like spirits of the light, shot broadly upwards, the mariner's beacon flame faded away with the stars, and the huge ships away, away out upon the quiet sea, appeared to be flecks of drifting foam upon the blushing ocean.

She was looking with placid enjoyment at this fresh display of natural beauty and sublimity; she could witness with eagerness the tumult of a tempest, but the glorious scene before her was one which was sure to lead Esther Meade into a state of calm religious contemplation. She felt that the attractive and harmonious blending of earth, ocean, and sky, as then seen, was produced for man's special observation and instruction; that the eye was made to convey impressions of these superb objects to the mind, and that while he must necessarily acknowledge evidence

of design in their creation, his heart must beat in gratitude to the great designer—the giver of all good.

Such was the bent of her thoughts as she stood leaning against one of the great rocks that studded the pebbly shore of Pendell bay. Esther Meade was a picture of health, and of womanly grace and dignity, and every look and gesture indicated self-reliance and resolution. She was of medium height, and her figure was almost perfect. Her face, though not very handsome, was one that a painter would like to study. It had a rare expression of calmness and determination; her eyes were blue and soft, but penetrating; they seemed to catch one's thoughts at a glance; and her dark brown hair was now almost hidden under the ample straw hat which she wore in her rambles and excursions. Though quite indifferent to the modes and almost endless changes of modern millinery, her dress was always most becoming, and without affecting contempt for expensive fashion, her own neat and peculiar style had imitators among many who were prone to indulge in the lace and silken mysteries of the boudoir.

Esther Meade delighted to be out with the dawn. In the mild Summer time she would often recline for over an hour, at a time upon some jutting rock that was covered with sea weed, and watch the rising sun, or wait until some distant sail had disappeared from view. She was accustomed to the sea in all its moods. She could row a boat or manage a sail; she could fish or swim, (as every woman should be able to do); she knew the whole channel into the bay as well as a pilot; and she knew every dangerous rock, and every wave-worn cave for some miles along the coast, and oftentimes, even in rather rough weather, she would sail or row out alone to the distant light-house, and if the day was calm, she would stay floating about for hours among the dangerous rocks surrounding that structure, peering down, as some hovering sea bird would, into the blue depths, as if looking after some stray anchor of the Armada, or watching some shining object below; or eager to find some relic of a storm, or

trace the scattered spoil of a wreck. It was her delight to be away on these excursions; she knew no fear, and she would venture out in the wildest storm did necessity require it. Her father often told her that she was too daring, but, knowing her coolness and dexterity, he seldom felt uneasy at her absence. She had been trained to this rough and healthy exercise by her brother, and since his departure she seemed more inclined to take such recreation; it no doubt reminded her of the many happy hours they had thus spent together. She felt his absence sorely; she had now no companion in her wild excursions; most of her female friends thought her too reckless, scarcely one of them would venture to join in her hazardous expeditions, and none of the farmers' sons in the parish would presume to make advances to the curate's daughter, and the sons of such of the gentry as chose to reside near Pendell generally sought fashion in London, or in other cities, often spending lavishly what their fathers, in their latter years, had tried to save.

In the Summer months a titled family or two might make a short stay at Pendell; ordinary visitors came and went, but none came who could in any measure supply the place of her brother. There was one particular visitor, however, who professed to greatly enjoy such recreation as she was in the habit of taking, and who seemed willing to spend half of his time out in the Bay; this was the Rev. George Morton, the rector. He, no doubt, wished to make his parochial visits to Pendell periods of special relaxation; during such times, he strove to pay the most distinguished attention to Miss Meade, and he often proposed to accompany her in a ramble along the shore, or on a boating excursion; she evidently stood very high in his estimation, and he was anxious to have her understand his appreciation. She, however, seemed indifferent as to whether the rector considered her clever, or amiable, or otherwise; she, somehow, never felt inclined to take a walk, or enter a boat during his stay; and as she did not consider herself particularly favored either by his prefer-

ence or pressing requests, she always had a ready excuse to remain at home. Still, on her father's account, knowing his dependent position on the mere whim of his superior—or rather of his employer—she endeavored to make herself as agreeable as possible, and to keep Mr. Morton from fancying himself at all slighted. Sometimes the rector was accompanied by his wife, he appeared anxious that she and Miss Meade should become very intimate, but Mrs. Morton felt her position, she was too straight-laced and dignified in her manner with the curate's daughter, and the formal invitation which she had given Esther to visit the distant, stylish rectory, had never yet been formally accepted.

So Miss Meade, fair and attractive as she was in her twenty-fourth year, could not boast of a lover, or of a choice companion; neither did she receive, except seldom, the polite attentions which gentlemen are generally glad to show to ladies of refinement and education. Had her father been a bishop, or a rich rector, many gallants might have fancied that her blushes had reddened their wine; but as he was only a poor curate, the shade of his penury paled the modest bloom that would have adorned a princess. Her comparatively secluded position had, however, given her more self-reliance, and as she cared neither for the frivolity of artificial friendship, nor for the glare of fashionable life, she only sought to make her father's home happy, and to do her duty within her own particular sphere. As a clergyman's daughter, she took great interest in the affairs of their rural church. In one sense she was in principle strongly "high church," that is, her father and her grandfather, and her great grandfather, having been duly ordained and declared successors in the apostolic order, and authorized to preach wholesome doctrine, and to administer the two Protestant sacraments according to the ceremonial of the Church of England, she inherited, or believed that she had a right to inherit, strong prejudices in favor of the Established Church. Her ideas of theology were educed more from the

church catechism and the church prayer book, than from the Bible, and she therefore inferred that the Church of which that prayer book was the expositor, was, and must be, the sole pillar and ground of truth. No wonder, then, that she looked upon dissenters as rank and obstinate errorists, and upon the chapels, or conventicles, as she preferred to call them, of Presbyterians, or of Methodists, or of other denominations, as places or dens where rank heresy was inculcated contrary to the ceremonies, doctrines and articles plainly set forth in the aforesaid Protestant manual; and, like a certain class of high church individuals, she could treat Popery with respect, while dissent was but worthy of contempt. Still the actions of Esther Meade were not intolerant; it was only her opinions that were illiberal. How fortunate it would have been for mankind, had such virtuous inconsistency controlled the acts of the inhuman religious dogmatists of other days! In her frequent intercourse with humble families in the parish, as well as in the more distant parts, she never inquired as to their creed, with a view to regulate her sympathies; she tried to discover their wants, and then she made efforts to benefit all without distinction. The preachers or teachers of dissent were in reality the only ones against whom she ever hurled a reproach, and although she had an instinctive dread of Infidelity, yet she tried to think it more consistent and less injurious to the uneducated and humbler classes, than the crude schism propagated by dogmatic or blatant reverends of the Knox or Wesley schools. The Established Church was therefore to her the real true Church for England; it was the spiritual successor of its ancient Roman mother, a church which she venerated for its antiquity, but denounced because of its oppression. The English Church was freed from the useless ostentatious ceremonies of Romanism, it was purged from the pagan and superstitious rites which had adhered to the ancient faith, and it shone forth in happy England as the authorized exponent of Christian truth. She often wondered why these characteristics were not apparent to all,

and that all did not submit to its teachings. The Roman Church, she believed, had been once divinely ordained, but it had fallen from its glory, it had become proud and intolerant, and had forfeited its position of pre-eminence. It had persecuted, and this, she thought, was alone sufficient to insure its degradation. A Christian church, persecuting for opinion's sake, seemed monstrous; and she well knew that the great ecclesiastical Roman power had cared but very little for human life where its own intolerant aims required a human sacrifice.

Overlooking its many bitter contests for supremacy, she shuddered at its wanton prosecution of the wild attempts of the crusades in which whole nations had been involved. The Head of the Christian Church, Christian potentates, and Christian priests, had all urged the credulous and impressible multitudes to arm; and frantic hosts, with sword and torch, rushed forward to slay the hated possessor of the "Holy Land," in order to rescue what was supposed to be the sepulchre of Christ from pagan control; and though the Saracens had generally respected the religious idea of the Pilgrims who went to visit the sacred tomb, and had even allowed them to build a church; and though many believe that there is no fair evidence to prove that these enlightened unbelievers had ever desecrated the spot so sacred to Christians, yet, in later times, after a horde of barbarous Turks had taken possession of Jerusalem, when it was asserted that Christian pilgrims had been terribly abused, Christian nations became incensed, and believed that the Almighty required them to deal out signal vengeance, and in what followed, we see the "Christian at work."

Pope Urban II., greatly affected, it is said, by the recitals of Peter the Hermit, who had visited Jerusalem, addressed an immense multitude, and urged them to depart and rescue the holy sepulchre, and as soon as he had raised his hand to bless the armed host, and had pronounced the absolution of their sins, they rushed off in their terrible course of destruction.

So, onward marched a motly assemblage of undisciplined thousands, wearing a cross upon the shoulder, displaying the cross upon flaunting banners, and shouting the battle cry of "*Deus vult*," God wills it. The belief was then general, that the whole world was about to be destroyed, and that the great day of judgment was at hand. Every eclipse was the cause of intense alarm; business was almost entirely neglected; buildings were suffered to become ruins, and true believers seemed only anxious to propitiate heaven by attempting to rescue the holy sepulchre ere the final consumation of all things. Insane with this idea, the fanatical Crusaders dealt no mercy to those who opposed them; men, women and children, they remorselessly slaughtered; neither tender infancy nor hoary age was respected, and thousands of unfortunate Jews were wantonly murdered. In the first crusade, after a siege of five weeks, Jerusalem was taken by assault, and a distinguished writer * remarks: "Neither arms defended the valiant, nor submission the timorous. No age or sex was spared, infants on the breast were pierced by the same blow with their mothers who implored for mercy; even a multitude, to the number of 10,000 persons who had surrendered themselves prisoners, *and were promised quarter*, were butchered in cold blood by those ferocious conquerors." It is admitted that, throughout the entire period of these terrible struggles, the Christians were more brutal, and far less merciful, than the unbelievers whose country they had invaded; and though they had violated treaties with impunity, yet when the chivalrous infidel, Saladin, took Jerusalem, he spared all.

However, after these vast preparations, after the prayers of the Church, after seven different crusades occurring from time to time during a period of over 150 years, causing the destruction of over two millions of human beings; after such a waste of blood and treasure, and after such untold expense, a few temporary successes were the mea-

* Hume.

gre result; and the cowed, decimated crusaders returned, leaving the "Holy City" still in the possession of the unbeliever; and Palestine, even to the present day, rejects the cross, and is under the dominion of the crescent.

The main benefits which the world derived from the crusades, were an increase of commerce with the unbelieving nations of the East, and the extended influence of Grecian and Saracenic civilization and refinement among Christians; but the Christian Church was a peculiar gainer, inasmuch as it was further enriched by a fresh supply of human skulls and bones, and other saintly relics direct from the blest or cursed city of Jerusalem.*

Restless in its mighty power, the Church still aimed at universal domination; it was powerless for the time against Paganism, but there were others whom it could control. There were actually Christians at that time who disputed the doctrines and defied the arrogance of the Roman power. The Greek Church was a rival which could not safely be assailed, but there was heresy in the land, even within the limits of Pontifical authority, which must be crushed out to save the integrity of the so-called "Mother Church;" and the sword which had been used ineffectually when the Christian was at work against the Infidel in Palestine, was now to be turned against a Christian community in the south of France. The Albigenses were the unfortunate people against whom the head of the Church had directed his ire. In A. D. 1209 Pope Innocent III. proclaimed a crusade against these unoffending brethren—to him they were criminals because they had

* Alluding to the Crusaders, Guizot says: "They also found themselves in juxtaposition with two civilizations not only different from their own, but more advanced, the Greeks on the one hand, and the Mohammedans on the other. It is curious to observe in the old chronicles, the impression which the Crusaders made upon the Mussulmans. These latter regarded them first as barbarians; as the rudest, the most ferocious, and the most stupid class of men they had ever seen. The Crusaders, on their part, were struck with the riches and elegance of manners of the Mussulmans." (*Hist. Civilization*, Vol. 1, p. 154.)

dared to regulate their own religious belief—and he urged Catholic princes and people to hasten forward in the holy war of extermination; and in his fierce exhortation to the king of France, used these words: “We exhort you that you would endeavor to destroy that wicked heresy of the Albigenses, and to do this with more vigor than you would toward the Saracens themselves; persecute them with a strong hand, deprive them of their lands and possessions, banish them and put Roman Catholics in their room.” An army of nearly half a million of fierce zealots was soon assembled, each of whom was exempted from the jurisdiction of secular courts and tribunals for debt or for crime; the pardon of all sins, past and future, was promised by the Church, and a special indulgence was granted to every one who should become enrolled in the holy army. The crusaders against Pagans in Palestine wore a cross on the shoulder, and, as a distinguishing mark, the crusaders against Christians in France wore a cross on the breast, and were headed and commanded by Christian princes, legates, bishops, and noblemen. Count Raymond of Toulouse, then ruler of the territory inhabited by the Albigenses, though himself a Catholic, was quite averse to the persecution of his own people, and his interference in their behalf greatly offended the Pope, who was determined to extirpate the heresy. So when the great army moved forward the Count became greatly alarmed, and tried to conciliate his Holiness by consenting to act even against the Albigenses; and though the Pope affected to grant him a pardon, he merely wished to keep him submissive for the time, intending to punish him when opportunity offered. The Pope’s duplicity is exposed in the following message which he addressed to his legate: “We counsel you, with the Apostle Paul, to employ guile with regard to this Count, for in this case it ought to be called prudence. We must attack separately those who are separated from unity; leave for a time the Count of Toulouse, employing towards him a wise dissimulation, that the other heretics may be the more easily defeated,

and that afterwards we may crush him when he shall be left alone." Such was the craft used by the Vicar of Christ; his fanatical army thirsted for blood, and terrible was the onslaught; even history almost hesitates to give the dark and sickening details of years of rapine, blood and slaughter.

Having taken the city of Beziers, which was at that time crowded with refugees—Catholics as well as heretics—the leaders of the impatient fanatics requested the Pope's legate, then present, to inform them, before the slaughter commenced, how they should distinguish Catholics from heretics, to which the legate sent this dreadful reply: "Tuez les Tous, Dieu connoit ceux qui sont a lui!"—Kill them all, God will know His own. This infamous command was strictly obeyed—not one was left alive—not a house was left standing, and in the sad night when Beziers was in blood and flames, over 60,000 human beings lay slaughtered within its blackened boundaries—a fearful evidence that the Christian had been at work.

CHAPTER V.

“THE CHRISTIAN AT WORK.”

THERE have been saints in all ages, and in all nations, Pagan as well as Christian. As boors without personal worth, or the least trace of natural nobility, can, even at the present day, be created temporal Lords, so the vilest of sinners, without a single ray of holiness, can still be baptized or elevated into saints. The Church has ever been ready to canonize its favorites, no matter what the world might think of them or of their absurd or almost miraculous transition from fiends to spirits of light. If Pope or Prince recognized their services, from either a spiritual, political, or peculiar point, it was easy to cancel sins, venial or mortal, to pronounce absolution, and, therefore, with the sacred sponge of authority, to wipe out every stain. High Priests of all creeds have, for a consideration, generally been willing to transform hideousness into beauty, and to change the sordid, brutal character of some obsequious tyrant into one of meekness and purity, deserving of a prominent position even in Paradise. It might not be easy to determine how much folly, how much virtue, or how much vice, would be sufficient to establish a claim for canonization, but it is well known that characters noted for great servility, for great humanity, or for great atrocities, have alike been elevated to the peerage of the celestial realm.

Now, without much seeking for illustrations as to why some have received such special spiritual distinction, we

all know that in Hindoostan the fanatic Brahmin who tore his flesh with iron hooks, or let his finger nails grow through the back of his hand, won the veneration of true believers, and was esteemed a saint; that the dervish, or Mohammedan monk, whose life was spent in prayer and penury, and who was ready to destroy an unbeliever to secure celestial glory, was likewise a saint; and we also know that Christian fakirs, like their originals in India, were canonized by the Church; one, because he had doled out a miserable existence, squatted and squalid, on the top of a high pillar, as did Symon the stylite; another, like St. Francis, because he had lived in a cave in rags and filth. One, because he could periodically lash and persecute himself; another, because he could systematically lash and persecute somebody else.

Then, besides these, there is a curious tribe known as National Saints, whose annual worship is generally a grand debauch, and whose reputed exploits are mostly as mythical as the origin of the saints themselves. St. George is venerated in England, probably because he is said to have killed a fiery dragon, and a multitude of ignorant Christians actually believe that, as a noted bare back rider, he performed that distinguished feat. St. Patrick is almost adored in Ireland, partly because it is believed that he banished snakes from the Emerald Isle, and partly because, by the convincing exhibition of a simple shamrock, he so impressed the minds of the Pagan Irish as to make them believe that there were three superior deities instead of one. And what St. Andrew did for Scotland, St. David for Wales, St. Dennis for France, Augustine for the Saxons, or Boniface for Germany, may be arrived at as correctly by a simple guess as by the perusal of any particular record in their behalf.

Among some of the latest worthies which the Roman Church has authoritatively added to the army of saints, we find the name of Peter D'Arbuss, who was Inquisitor General of Arragon in 1484, and an active persecutor of heretics. Ignatius Loyola, the gloomy fanatic and founder of the

crafty, unscrupulous order of Jesuits, was canonized by Pope Gregory XV. in 1663; and, centuries before that, the savage St. Dominic, who advocated and secured the establishment of the "Holy Inquisition," and who, as some assert, was the first Inquisitor General of that infamous tribunal, was officially included among the blest by Pope Gregory IX in 1223. This very St. Dominic was he who instigated the Pope against the Albigenses, and who aided and encouraged the brutal Montfort in a further course of persecution.

After the slaughter at Beziers, Count Simon De Montfort, the beloved avenger of the Church, was now leader of the "Holy Army," and he followed up his atrocious proceedings in different places, some of which proceedings are thus recorded by Catholic authors: "He took several castles which resisted the Holy Church, and hanged of good right many of their inhabitants upon gibbets, which they had well merited."* Relative to another place, the historian says: "The besieged, wearied out with a long siege, having fled during the night, were stopped by our guards, who cut the throats of as many as they could find."† And of another place: "The Count Simon having taken the castle, caused the above named Aimeri, a notable nobleman, to be hanged upon a gibbet, also a small number of knights. The other nobles, with some who had mixed among them in the hope that the knights would be spared, to the number of about eighty, were put to the sword, and lastly, some three hundred heretics burnt in this world were thus given over by him to the eternal fire, and Guirande, the lady of the chateau, cast into a well, was there crushed down with stones."‡

After a series of butcheries during the first year of the crusade against the Albigenses, the "holy army," with its numerous reinforcements, commenced its second year's campaign by taking, with other places, the castle of

* Peter of Vaulx Cernay.

† William of Nangis.

‡ Puy Laurens.

Brom, when about one hundred of its defenders were shockingly mutilated; their noses were cut off, and their eyes were torn out; but one individual was left one eye so that he might be able to conduct the Christian savages to the town of Carabat. All through their terrible course the taking of several other castles and towns was followed by similar atrocities; prisoners were offered the choice of apostasy, or fire, or mutilation. When Montfort advanced to the attack of Toulouse the peasants laboring in the field, were slaughtered—men, women and children were butchered—villages, cottages, and farm houses were burned to the ground, and the Pope's legate also ordered the destruction of vines, and the whole of the standing crops. Thus, when town after town had surrendered, Montfort was sure to order the execution of the inhabitants, and thus for over twenty years were the Albigenses persecuted and slaughtered by the unmerciful hosts of the Head of the Church.

Among the mountains in the north of Italy there was another body of Christians known as the Waldenses; they were not identical with the Albigenses, but were different doctrinally and otherwise. They were distinguished for the most irreproachable conduct, and a more inoffensive people could not be found in all Europe. Claudius, Archbishop of Turin, wrote: "Their heresy excepted, they generally live a purer life than other Christians." The charge of heresy was, however, brought against them and for over the great period of five hundred years—from 1179 to 1689—these people were fearfully harassed by the dominant church. The first edict against them was issued by Pope Alexander III. in which he said: "We therefore subject to a curse both themselves and their defenders and harborers, and under a curse we prohibit all persons from admitting them into their houses—but if they die in their sin let them not receive Christian burial. . . . We likewise from the mercy of God, and relying upon the authority of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, relax two years of enjoined penance to those faithful Christians who, by

the counsel of the bishops or other prelates, shall take up arms to subdue them by fighting against them." Soon after numbers of these people were burned at Bingen and at Mentz, and many others hunted from place to place, and scattered from country to country by an infuriated soldiery. Another edict was issued against them by Pope Lucius III. in 1181, and subsequently by other Popes and rulers. Pope Innocent VIII. in 1487 directed his nuncio and the Inquisitor General, Blasius, "To take up arms against the said Waldenses and other heretics, and to come to an understanding to crush them like venomous asps, and to contribute all their care to so holy and so necessary an extermination;" and afterwards Pope Pius IV., in 1560, authorized another brutal crusade against them, and the most terrible cruelties were again almost unceasingly perpetrated down to the year 1655, when, by the interposition of Oliver Cromwell, of England, they were partially discontinued, but were soon again renewed and continued until 1689.

A Catholic writer furnishes a narrative of one of the atrocities committed against the Waldenses in 1560, and states: "Having written you from time to time what has been done here in the affair of heresy, I have now to inform you of the dreadful justice which began to be executed on these Lutherans this morning, being the 11th of June, and to tell you the truth, I can compare it to nothing but the slaughter of so many sheep. They were shut up in one house, as in a sheepfold. The executioner went, and bringing out one of them, covered his face with a napkin, or benda as we call it, led him out to a field near the house, and causing him to kneel down, cut his throat with a knife. Then taking off the bloody napkin, he went and brought out another, whom he put to death after the same manner. In this way the whole number of eighty-eight men were butchered. I still shudder when I think of the executioner with his bloody knife in his teeth, the dripping napkin in his hand, and his arm besmeared with gore, going to the house and taking out one victim after

another, just as a butcher does the sheep he means to kill.”* Tomasso Costo, a Catholic historian, also wrote concerning the cruelties to the Waldenses: “Some had their throats cut, others were sawn through the middle, and others thrown from the top of a high cliff; all were cruelly but deservedly put to death.” The Waldenses, though subjected to such woful persecution, were not after all exterminated; they contended for liberty of opinion with extraordinary pertinacity; but it was not until the reign of Victor Emanuel, the present king of Italy, that they received the same privileges as others.

Esther Meade recalled these historical facts of religious persecution with a feeling of anguish and indignation. In addition to these cruelties, she had to remember the terrible Inquisition with its dread “familiars,” its “Holy Office,” its dungeons, its racks, screws, pulleys, weights, and other horrid instruments for producing the most agonizing torment. In imagination she could enter the gloomy “hall of torture,” and in the dim light she could see the malignant judges of that infernal court; she could see the rack, and the waiting executioner. She looks again, and oh! fearful scene! She sees one of her own sex, she sees a woman, young, and once beautiful, but now naked—yes, actually naked—stretched out in dire agony, with dislocated limbs, bleeding and fainting before men! Men? No! but before fiends in human shape, called—Inquisitors. There they sit, or recline, with their books and crosses, and with the stolid indifference of the veriest savages. Alas! alas! no soothing voice can ever more be heard, no word of comfort spoken in that dolorous hour, no tender human heart throbs with sympathy for that poor victim, no eye is dimmed with pity for so much human suffering, no ear is pained to hear the death groans of that delicate girl, guilty most likely of no offence, save that of having perhaps spoken lightly of some suspicious priest, or of some absurd rite of the Church. The dew of death is upon

* In a letter to Ascanio Caraccioli—Dowling’s Hist. Romanism.

her brow, her parted lips are reddened with her own life blood, her clotted hair, her bruised body, and her broken limbs, elicit no word of remorse for her agony. Alone and unresisting she is in the hands of her brutal persecutors; the muffled walls conduct no sound of her distress to the outward world, it is shut out to her forever. The icy hand of the last deliverer is now upon her, but the actual stare of death is less terrible to her closing eyes and fading vision than the scowl of the accursed monsters who sit before her—the clerical monsters of the holy order of St. Dominic.*

Fearful reminiscence! Miss Meade shudders as if she were an actual witness of that scene of horror; but soon another view is presented. It is a gala day in Madrid; it is the Christian Sabbath. The pious who have attended church are moving towards the massive, gloomy building of the Inquisition. The Spanish King and his courtiers are sitting on an elevated stage which is richly carpeted, and the royal person is shaded by a silken canopy.† There are also to be seen familiars and grandees from Cordova, and from other cities. Bishops in rich robes are in conspicuous positions, and great numbers of priests, monks and friars, attest that there is to be a ceremony of some kind in which the Church is greatly interested. The sunbeams flash upon the mitres and crosses of ecclesiastics, and upon the swords and spears and other military weapons of the armed missionaries of the "True Faith." All present seem to be in a state of excited expectation. But hark! a bell tolls—it has been tolling at intervals since the early dawn. It cannot be the call for an imposing or brilliant religious ceremony; no, 'tis a death knell, the knell for another dread act of religious persecution. See! There is now a movement in the vast crowd in front of the Inquisition; its heavy gates—like the gates of hell—yawn wide, and a procession, as if intended to represent

* Described from a similar record in the Hist. of the Inquisition.—Moreri.

† Charles II. was present at the "splendid" Auto da fe of 1680 at Madrid.—Chamb. Enc.

an egress of spirits of the damned, moves slowly out. Dominican friars--called pious men--are in advance, bearing the repulsive banner of the "Holy Inquisition," penitents, or those who have been terrified into compliance, follow; and then follow the bare-footed, sad, and long array of those who are destined for the flames. Some with pallid face are wounded and limping; some are too weak and emaciated to walk, and these, with others whose bones have been broken, and whose flesh has been mangled by the torture, are rudely borne towards the guarded space in front of the majesty, the episcopacy, and the nobility of Spain; and in the midst of the fanatical crowd whose eyes are hungry for a fresh scene of torture. The condemned are clad in the yellow *Sanbenito*, disfigured with infernal effigies, each wears the *coroza*, or pointed cap of infamy, and holds an extinguished torch; and each is attended by a Jesuit who hurls reproaches, instead of offering a word of pity or a prayer for mercy. They have now reached the great cross erected in the field of the Cruz del Quemadaro, the place of execution; the sentence is read, a blow is given to each of the condemned by one of the clerical officers of the Inquisition, and the accused are delivered over to the secular power. A feeble, formal, hypocritical plea in their behalf is muttered by a priest--a vile deceit; for the stakes are fixed, and the fuel is ready, and the condemned are chained and weeping. There is no offering of mercy in reply to that plea, for the Christian king ostentatiously sends his gilded and adorned fagot to be added to the pile. Oh horror! The flames ascend, a hundred human beings are shrieking, and groaning, and writhing in torture. The surrounding multitude are delighted, and thanks to God are given by the king, by the priests, and by the people, for this triumph of the True Faith, for the extirpation of so much heresy; and for the terrible spectacle of another *Auto da fe*.*

* On the 12th of May, 1689, eighty-three heretics, including twenty Jews, were burnt by the Inquisition, and a pile of wood eighty feet long and seven feet high was consumed in the religious ceremony.

CHAPTER VI.

"THE CHRISTIAN AT WORK."

WHEN one is in a reflective mood it often happens that the most melancholy ideas will present themselves to the mind; and memory seems to be importuned to add link after link to a chain of events solely relating to the sorrows and sufferings of mankind. While Thought, like an angel of hope, has most delight in soaring towards the splendors of heaven, it is sometimes doomed to descend and to flutter like a bat amid the gloom and the ruins of misery.

Esther Meade, ever pleased to reflect upon circumstances which related to the happiness of her kind, would fain retain ideas of all that had been conducive to earthly bliss, but now, unable to control her thoughts, they seemed determined to rush down with impetuous haste to the very confines of woe, and to bring back to her view some of the darkest pictures of history.

Nowhere in the annals of cruelty and oppression, can more dreadful events be discovered than those which relate to religious persecution; such events were now vividly before her mind, and, upon her return from her early ramble to the bay, she could think of but little else. She tried to make the retrospection more agreeable, but the sad review of the past continued in its sullen course, and the wholesale destruction of human life caused or directed by Dominicans, Jesuits, or Inquisitors General; by Torquemada, by Diego Deza, by Spanish Kings, such

as Chas. I. and Philip II., and by the monster Alva, who slaughtered thousands in the Netherlands, simply on account of a difference of opinion in matters of faith, induced the most painful reflections, and seemed to verify a remark which she was surprised to hear her father once make—"That Christianity had already cost the world over fifty millions of human lives."

Christianity? Impossible! The faith of a true Christian led all to bear reproach, to forgive enemies, and to be kindly affectionate, one to another; even that faith in its most adulterated form was superior to anything that Paganism had produced; and were the whole world controlled by its inspired maxims, what love, joy and peace might exist among men; and then there would be no more war, no more dissension, no more persecution. Alas! how stern is history in dealing with many of our fondest delusions; and how many thousands are rudely awakened to discover that religious devotion is too often the prolific parent of debasing superstition and cruelty.

While thinking thus fondly of the just tendency of her faith, she sat before a window, and in the full light was looking intently at what appeared to be a coin or medal of antiquated appearance, which she had just selected from a numismatic collection belonging to her father. Now she turns the piece in her hand; it is a small medal, an ornament which was perhaps once proudly worn or displayed in the olden time by some pious young Christian lady in holiday attire. It was a medal made to commemorate a distinguished triumph of the Church over its enemies; and though its primitive wearer had grown from youth to age, and had long since passed away, yet there was the identical memorial still left to tell again of its own origin. Miss Meade once more holds it out from her; now draws it closer and lays it down. She takes it up again, and on looking closely at the obverse side, she sees the stamped effigy of a Roman Pontiff in cap and buttoned cape, and around it the words, "Gregorius XIII. Pont. Max. An. I.;" and then on turning the reverse side, she

finds the representation of a furious winged angel with a cross exalted in one hand, and a sword in the other, pursuing and slaying heretics, while surrounded by the dead and the dying; and over all this she could read the significant inscription: “Hugonitorum Strages 1572.”*

Being in a contemplative mood, and while her gaze is fixed upon the old medal, the veil is again lifted and she finds herself almost in the centre of a large city—a Christian capital, too; for there are many great churches and tall steeples, and numerous crosses, some of which are up alone among the scattered night-clouds; while others gleam in the clear moonlight of the open sky. It is approaching the hour of midnight, the air is calm and genial, and there are many sleepers in the quiet houses around. There are but few revelers to be seen in the streets, yet occasional sounds of distant music and festivity reach the ear. The city must be gay, for it contains thousands of invited strangers who had come to witness the royal marriage which recently took place; but many of the wearied are now seeking repose, and the proud Parisian metropolis is comparatively still. But why are those armed bands moving around, and whither at this late hour moves that column of soldiers, whose weapons reflect the moonbeams? It is not a time of war, yet armed groups of citizens are to be seen at almost every street corner; and a large number of troops are assembled near the royal palace. But hark! the clock strikes twelve—it is midnight—the bell in the tower of the Louvre quickly tolls aloud in the clear air, and the lone boom of a heavy gun is heard in the distance. There are loud shouts and confusion; there is a rush of armed fanatics into a chamber where a wounded man is seeking repose; he is guarded by several Swiss soldiers who are speedily cut down by the assassins that have entered; the wounded man—the Huguenot leader, Admiral Coligny—is brutally murdered, and his mutilated

* In pulling down the old mint building, Cowgate Edinburg, a specimen of the medal struck by Gregory XIII. to commemorate the massacre of St. Bartholomew, was discovered.

body tumbled out of a window into the street, to be dragged about by an infuriated populace. Shots and heavy firing, and shrieks and cries of distress are now heard every moment. Huguenots, trying to escape, rush frantically through the streets, but are pursued and slaughtered by the yelling savages that follow, or are shot down from the windows of the houses. Numbers of the pursued, believing that the king would surely protect them, hurry onwards to the Louvre, but Charles, the monarch of France, is firing on them, his own people, from an upper window of the palace, while several of his attendants are constantly loading guns to enable him to shoot a greater number of his Protestant subjects.

All night long the slaughter continues, and fugitives are hunted from place to place in every quarter of the city. By grey dawn the streets are encumbered with the murdered, and the river Seine is glutted with the dead bodies cast into it; and on the morning of the 25th of August, 1572, the sun shone down upon bloody pavements and upon heaps of intermingled dead and dying, even around the very palace of the Louvre; and soon as the butchery was over, Catherine de Medici, of pious memory, queen dowager of France, gazed with satisfaction upon the havoc, and the King himself went out to see the hated slain, and to look upon the disfigured body of Coligny, to whom he had promised friendship and protection; and while stooping over his slaughtered people he expressed his pious felicity by saying that the "smell of a dead enemy was agreeable." Special orders were then given to continue the carnage, and the "Agents of Divine Justice" in their eagerness to advance the True Faith, deluged many of the French provinces with blood, until the exposed corpses of over thirty thousand human beings tainted the air and produced wide spread infection. The Parliament of France publicly eulogized the conduct of his Christian majesty, and the King and the Court returned thanks to God for His signal aid in crushing out so much heresy.

In great haste a messenger is despatched to another

city. The news of the slaughter at Paris, and in other parts of France, is the cause of much joy and congratulation even within the sacred walls of St. Peters. The welcome words of the king's message which said that "the Seine flowed on more majestically after receiving the dead bodies of the heretics," is received by the Roman Pontiff with expressions of high approval. The joy in Rome is great; and Pope Gregory, the "Vicar of Christ," attended by his cardinals, goes in grand procession to the Church of St. Louis to sing "Te Deum laudamus," and to return special thanks to God for the triumph just gained over the enemies of His holy Church. The Pope's legate in France is instructed to felicitate "the most Christian King Charles," and to assure him that his Holiness "praised the exploit so long meditated and so happily executed for the good of religion." So important for the advancement of the Faith is the slaughter at Paris considered, that Pope Gregory orders medals to be struck in honor of the happy event, and the medal at which Esther Meade is still looking is one of those designed by the head of the Christian Church to commemorate the dreadful massacre of the Huguenots at Paris on St. Bartholemew's day.

So far the sickening remembrances had been of persecution by the Catholic Church, and Miss Meade would have made a plea for the reformed faith by trying to imagine that it was free from the contaminations of Rome, and therefore not subject to the abominable charge of fanatical cruelty. She would even have charitably shielded the Popish religion from the terrible accusations brought against it, but she was reluctantly forced to admit that that religion had almost desolated the earth; and that the whole system of paganism had never equaled the atrocities committed by the so-called "Mother Church." She wished to believe that no creed whatever emanating from Christianity, could ever be so debased as to punish unto death for opinion's sake, but not being able to escape from historical facts, she hoped to find competent author-

ity to place the burden of that iniquity upon Rome. But what said the same history as to the absurd ideas, the conflicting doctrines, the bitter dissensions, and the fierce persecutions by the adherents of Protestantism? Why that Luther, the great reformer, was so superstitious as to believe that epidemic diseases, earthquakes, and other evils, were produced by the direct agency of Satan. He believed that the Devil had often disturbed him at night; he believed in astrology, and that the peculiar appearance of the northern lights on a certain night, indicated the speedy approach of the end of sublunary things. He was an intolerant bigot, and inveterate against those who opposed him: he would have shed the blood of the Pope and the bishops; he even looked upon such reformers as Carlstadt, Erasmus, and Zwingle, as rank heretics, and, judged by his own words, he would, in support of his own crude faith, have taken human life. Luther exhibited great inhumanity towards the Anabaptists, and his disposition against them may be inferred by an extract of a letter which he addressed to his friend, Myconius; he wrote: "I am pleased that you intend to publish a book against the Anabaptists as soon as possible. Since they are not only blasphemous, but seditious men, let the *sword* exercise its right over them. For this is the will of God, that He shall have judgment who resisteth the power." Luther, even Luther, therefore wanted only sufficient strength and authority to be a theological despot and a persecutor.

And what of Calvin, the great French reformer? He was a gloomy fanatic, who, filled with impious zeal, advo-

* In a sermon, preached at Dundee, Scotland, the preacher, a Presbyterian minister made the following remarks on Calvin:

"He was harsh, narrow, dogmatic, cold, cruel. The system of polity established while he lived in Geneva, was worse than that which prevailed in Naples, under Bomba. It was a system of brutal cruelty. One James Gruet, for writing some loose verses was beheaded. Even little boys and girls were liable to capital punishment for trivial offences. And need he name Servetus, a name which despite the one-sided sophistry of Calvin's defenders, rested like a bloody blot on that reformer's brow."

cated and defended the burning of the unfortunate Servetus for heresy; and he gloried over the infamous deed when he wrote: "Whoever shall contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to *death*, will willingly and knowingly incur their very guilt. This rule is not laid down by human authority, but it is God himself who speaks." Another reformer, the "meek Melancthon," approved of the vile act, and declared that the body of Seryetus should have been chopped to pieces, and his bowels torn out.

Munzer, a disciple of Luther, a leader and a preacher of the Anabaptists, was a reckless agitator. Dissatisfied with the holy measures of the reformers; he pulled down the images which Luther had left standing in the churches; he proclaimed a community of goods, and incited his followers to plunder the houses of the wealthy; and, finally at the head of about forty thousand turbulent fanatics, he ravaged the whole country, and brought destruction upon himself and many of his unreasoning dupes.

Overlooking many other scenes of religious infatuation and cruelty which occurred on the Continent, the spectre of memory moves on and overshadows England; and there, too, the fury of religious strife is producing its blighting effects. The Christian sect has been almost annihilated; and frantic zealots are in the arena. Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Independents, are pursuing one another with deadly hostility. Archbishop Laud, like an Inquisitor General in the Star Chamber, is furious against seceders and non-conformists; and in his holy wrath he crops the ears, slits the noses, and otherwise mutilates disaffected Puritans. Whatever sect is in temporary power, and most patronized by rulers or by royalty, is always most oppressive; and during several reigns, according as Prelacy, or Puritanism, or Presbyterianism predominates, the mutual struggle for ascendancy devastates the land; and their deep hatred of one another, as well as their common hatred of Popery, is productive of horrible atrocities. There is hanging, and burning, and quartering, and

disemboweling, in almost every part of the kingdom, in behalf of what is for the time, the "True Faith;" and the knife, the axe, the rack, and the fagot, are readily put to fearful use even in Old England.

In Ireland the penal laws against Roman Catholics were most shamefully applied. This terrible code consisted of over one hundred acts of Parliament, solely enacted for the express purpose of enforcing Protestant doctrines. A Catholic schoolmaster dared not teach; and neither Catholic nor Protestant teachers were permitted to instruct Catholic children. A Catholic priest dared not reside in the country without special permission, and a reward was offered for the discovery of any priest or bishop not registered as having license as such. A Catholic priest convicted of having performed any religious ceremony, or of having married a Catholic and a Protestant, was condemned to be hanged; and all marriages between Catholics and Protestants were annulled. A wife on becoming a Protestant could take the entire property of her husband; and a son, by a like change of faith, might dispossess his father. There were many other similar enactments, and Catholics of every degree were sorely oppressed; and for the least unfriendliness, or resistance to most arbitrary laws, were liable to ruinous forfeitures or death; and the most inhuman cruelty and slaughter often followed. During the long period of this terrible oppression in Ireland, thousands were sent to bloody and untimely graves, and if the persecutions by Protestants have not been, perhaps, as infamously extensive as those of Catholics, it was only because the venomous power of Protestantism was too divided, or too limited. Protestantism, as well as Catholicity, possessed the genuine spirit, the vicious animus, of intolerance, and needed only the requisite strength and domination, to equal, or even to surpass, in oppression and savage cruelty, all that had been done by the imperious ecclesiastical power of Rome.

Were the angel of Destruction required to speak for the many slain of every land, he might say that the most

dreadful wars which have taken place in every part of the globe, were caused by intriguing priests, or by the virulence of religious feeling. And were it possible for an angel of Peace to re-animate the myriads of slaughtered men, he might plead that they should be placed in some world where there was no priest, no prophet, no altar, and no temple; and where it would be considered the vilest blasphemy to assert that the Supreme Being could be influenced and governed by passions alike to those of man—by anger, by hatred, by revenge. And the angel might then, perhaps, reveal an unwelcome truth by announcing to all, to the Pagan, to the Christian, and to the Moham-medan, that priests, and their pretensions, and their inspired books, had as yet only misled humanity.

CHAPTER VII.

“THE CHRISTIAN AT WORK.”

WEARIED by these sad reflections, Miss Meade sought a little relaxation. Her father had been absent all day, and now it being evening time, she set out to pay a visit to old Sarah Afton, whose cottage was but a short distance from the parsonage. She found its inmate at her spinning wheel, and, as usual, in a conversable mood. Old Sarah, though very credulous and superstitious, was rather intelligent. She lived almost alone, her only household companion being a little orphan girl.

“Eh, but I’m glad to see you, young lady; I’m glad you’ve called again; I’ve had scarcely a visitor, and I’ve been a bit lonesome. Bless you, take a seat near me, and let me see your pleasant face. I’ve been thinking of old times—and what times there are to think of, to be sure—and this very day brings something sorrowful to my mind—it is an eventful day even in my own poor life.”

“Oh, nothing, I trust, very serious, mother?” said Miss Meade.

“Mother! ah, you always call me mother; ’tis a pleasant name. I think every woman would like to be called mother, and to be a mother, though I’ve never been one—nor even a wife. Well, deary, ’tis sometimes sad even to think. Almost every memory seems mournful to the aged, and, as I am now long past life’s three score years and ten, my thoughts are often bleak enough. Ah me!

all I used to know at your age, where are they? Only one poor old soul left—only one; except my sister's grand-son, and 'tis hard to tell on what part of the wide ocean he is just now. But, sweet lady, I will not burden your cheerful mind with any troubles of the past. You know your good father sometimes tells us, that 'sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.' "

"Well, but you may tell me your troubles, mother, unless you wish to keep them a secret; we all have sorrowful thoughts at times; and a grief may be blunted by telling it to a friend."

"I have few secrets from you, deary—few indeed from anybody. I have told you about many of the sad acts that took place hereabouts, years ago; I've shown you the spots where poor creatures were killed, and when we walked over there among the old graves, where many a monk lies buried, I've shown you where they said that martyrs were burnt; and you know the lone spot where I told you that my great-grandfather lost his life, don't you?"

Miss Meade nodded assent, and old Sarah went on.

"Well, its over a hundred years ago, this very second of May, since that poor man met his end; and, strange to tell, about a hundred years before that, on the very same day of the month, too, *his* grandfather was shot by Claverhouse."

"By Claverhouse?" Miss Meade interrogated, as if she had forgotten such a name.

"Yes, by the 'bluidy Claverhouse,' as the Scotch called him. He overtook the poor man and two other Covenanters out on a moor, and he ordered his troopers to shoot them; the three graves are there to this day."

"Yes, I now remember," said Miss Meade. "The Covenanters suffered terribly in the south, and in the west of Scotland; the Prelatists were their bitter persecutors."

"Aye, deary, there are many graves all over those wild moors. The Covenanters, poor bodies, were hunted from place to place by day and by night; Claverhouse and his troopers gave them little rest. You know that the Prot-

estant curates of those days--not like some of our good curates--were a set of carousing, godless men, who wanted to force all to attend the parish church; and in order to find out the ones that went to Conventicles, they gave the sojers the names of almost every one in a parish; the sojers stood outside the church on Sundays, and took down the names of the folks that came out, and all they found absent were at once marked suspected. The 'bluidy council,' as it was called, that sat in Edinboro', ordered the sojers to do the bidding of the curates, and then Claverhouse and his troopers did the rest. Ah me! There were curious warnings given in those times of what was going to happen. Armed horseman used to be seen galloping up steep hills that a goat could hardly climb, men without heads used to be seen standing in lonesome places; blood spots would come in bibles while some poor body was reading; and crowds of sojers would be seen marching through the moors, and then vanishing in a moment. This is what was known in Scotland as the 'killing time,' and the poor Covenanters had to flee to the glens, and the moors, and to caves, and other wild places, but they were watched, and hunted, and slaughtered, day and night without mercy; and often, after they had met to worship in some dark glen, Claverhouse would pounce upon them unexpectedly, and then there was bloody work.

"They prayed on the hillside, and sung in the glen,
In wilds far remote from the scoffings of men;
Yet the friends of the Lord, oft in pitiful plight,
Had to flee from the foe in the dead of the night.

A sweet Sabbath came, and the saints met once more,
To pray in the desert like others of yore;
But the troopers rushed on them, by Claverhouse led,
There were graves to be dug for the dying and dead."

Old Sarah repeated these verses from memory. "Ah me!" she continued, "but it was dreadful to hear tell of it. They tried every way to discover the hiding places of the poor creatures.

The dragoons once took a little boy of ten years, and as he would not tell them where his father was, they tied a cord round his thumbs, and suspended the terrified lad before his mother, and, though he was in great agony, he would tell them nothing; they then held his face over a large fire till his eyes were ready to start out, and his tender skin to crack, yet still he would not answer; he was then dragged outside and the soldiers told him they would blow out his brains. They took another boy and tied a cord round his brow, and twisted it with the butt end of a pistol, till the flesh was cut through to the bone, so that the poor boy died. When they didn't kill outright they tortured men and women in many ways. They stifled them in crowded vaults, they tied men down upon their backs, and put lighted matches between the fingers of both hands, until their very finger bones were sometimes burnt to ashes; and many others were starved to death in prison.* 'Tis dreadful to think of, young lady; for they often killed women as well as men. I've also heard tell of how they shot poor Marion Cameron at Cumnock. This poor thing, with a few other women, were singing hymns in a green hollow place in the moss of Daljig, when a lot of troopers came along by chance, and shot them all. They were buried side by side on the moor. But I think that the murder of poor Driesthill, or John Brown, the pious carrier, was one of the most dreadful. The poor man, having risen early, went out to dig; he was suddenly seized by a company of horsemen, who drove him before them. Isabel, his wife, on looking out, saw him, and, snatching up her infant, exclaimed, "O! Lord, give me

* Dunnotar was a noted place for the persecution of Covenanters. There is a tombstone in the church yard of that place bearing the following inscription:

"Here lie John Scott, James Aitchison, James Russel. and William Brown. and one whose name we have not gotten; and two women also whose names we know not. and two who perished doune the rock; and one whose name was James Watson, the other not known, who all died prisoners in Dunnotar Castle, Anno 1685, for their adherence to the Word of God and Scotland's Covenanted work of Reformation."

grace for this hour." She went out, and for the first time saw the dreaded Claverhouse; and then she knew her great trial had come. Her husband was told to kneel on the wet sod, and to prepare for death. The poor man knelt down with great calmness, and prayed long for his enemies before him; he then pleaded pitifully for his wife and children, and then he embraced them tenderly, and left them to God. Many of the rough soldiers had tears in their eyes, and would have wept outright, only they were afraid. Claverhouse was impatient at so much delay, and told his men to fire. The pieces were leveled—there was a pause—poor Isabel's sobs were alone heard, but not a gun went off; the poor man before them, still calmly bowed and kneeling, awaiting his fate.

"God bless your tender hearts," said the weeping woman. "O! spare him to us, and the Lord will have mercy on you another day. Spare him, good men, for the sake of his poor children!" The savage Claverhouse then grew furious; he swore fearfully against the soldiers, and rudely pushed Isabel aside; he placed his pistol close to the ear of the kneeling man, and blew out his brains.

When the deed was done, Claverhouse shouted out, "What thinkest thou of thy husband now, woman?" "I ever thought myckle gude of him," said she, "and now mair than ever." "It would be but justice to lay thee beside him," replied Claverhouse. "I doubt not, replied she, "but your cruelty would lead you to that length; but how will you answer to God for this morning's work?" "To man alone," he said, "I can be answerable; as for God, I will take him in my own hands." After the departure of the troopers, poor Isabel tied up the shattered head of her husband with a napkin, and then drawing her children to her, she wept with them long and loud over the mangled body, and for the time would not be comforted. Poor, poor woman, she needed God to comfort her then; and strange to tell, the whole thing was foretold to her the day of her wedding; the minister, a Mr. Peden, said, "Isabel Weir, Isabel Weir, keep a winding sheet beside

you, for it may be hastily needed some misty morning ;” and alas ! so it was.*

Throughout the sad recital, Miss Meade was much affected. The simple narrative had readily touched her heart ; but then she had to remember with some reluctance, that many of the persecuted Covenanters who had escaped from Scotland, and most of the oppressed Puritans who had left England, after having landed at Plymouth Rock in America, and in their eager desire to force their faith, or their peculiar doctrines on others, had united to establish an iron rule of religious despotism ; the infamous Blue Laws had been enacted by them ; they had burnt so-called witches ; they had despoiled, mutilated, and hung unoffending Quakers, and for many years their course had been one of brutal fanaticism in the land of their adoption. So atrocious were most of their proceedings, that the name of Puritan is now held by many as the synonym for bigotry and intolerance.

Just as old Sarah had ceased speaking, she looked at a shadow which moved slowly along the little winding pathway close to the cottage. In a few moments a very old, grey-headed man stood bent before them in the open doorway. As he leaned with both hands upon his staff, the few thin, white hairs which hung below his broad brimmed hat were scarcely stirred by the evening air ; but the setting sun which fell upon his meek, sad face, had burnished his scanty locks, as if to restore the golden hue which they had in his boyhood. Old Sarah got up immediately and went to meet him at the door ; he gently took her extended hand, and she led him to a seat by her side. The old man’s smile was radiant as he bowed to Miss Meade ; and he muttered some words of thanks to Sarah.

“ Well, Stephen, I thought you had forgot me ; you’ve been away nearly two days, and you know that on this day, above all others, you should have been here early.

* See Wodrow’s Hist. of Persecution of Scottish Covenanters.

Nearly two days is a long time for me not to see you, Stephen; a long time, when time is sometimes so long to me."

"I haint forgot thee, Sarah," replied the old man mildly. "'Twould be too late in life to forget thee noo, thoo knows that, lass; but I've been a bit busy to-day i' the church, and" said he lowering his voice, "I've been around the old spot again, a looking for *that*—seems they won't give it up yet—best to search no more; but still thoo says it maun coom sume time yet afore we dee. Well, I gav it oop again to-day, and, as the e'en appeared, I felt a bit lonesome, and wanted to see thee again afore the night cam."

The setting sunlight was upon the old man's face as he looked up at Sarah, and the expression of his countenance was most placid and benevolent. Old Sarah placed her hand upon his uncovered head, and looked tenderly into his eyes—tenderly as a fond mother would look at her child; at that particular moment her youth seemed to return, and one might fancy that she was a maiden again, looking almost as beautiful as of yore.

"Poor Stephen! When will that night come that must separate us? When? It can't be far off now, Stephen?"

Sarah's voice trembled as she spoke, and the old man seemed to look vacantly at a shadow out upon the green sward before the door, as he softly said:

"It must coom, lass, it must coom; maybe soon, too; but then we maun meet again. Thoo's got my promise, and I've got thine, that who goes into the night first, maun coom back t' tother; I'll keep my word lass, and I well know that thou'lt keep thine. Mayhap we may both gan off together, and then we shall be as one at last upon that t'other shore."

Miss Meade was aware that there was some peculiar bond or relation between these two old people. She had more than once been present, and had heard their expressions of mutual esteem, if not of tenderness; and had just witnessed a touching display of affection, but the real

nature of the tie she as yet knew not. They were undoubtedly the oldest persons in the parish; they were not relatives, and old and young looked upon them with the kindest feelings.

Stephen Gray, for that was the old man's name, though better known by all as Old Stephen, had, so far, spent nearly the whole of his life at Pendell. He was some years older than Sarah Afton, and like her had never been married, and had neither kith nor kin that he knew of in the land of the living. Any way, he seemed content to remain near Sarah, whom he had known from youth, and to finish the journey of life in the little cottage, or rather hut, that he had so long occupied. This humble abode was near the church, even within the enclosed grave yard, and he appeared to like his home all the better because it was so near that spot to which he expected to be removed before many years. Stephen had been sexton at Pendell even before Mr. Meade had become the curate, but age had incapacitated him to some extent, and for a long period his principal duty was merely to keep the church, and a few old family tombs in order, and to have a kind of supervision over minor matters connected with the church and the cemetery. At leisure hours he seemed to take a quiet pleasure in wandering among the many graves, as if to commune with the dead, or as if anxious to recall to remembrance some of those who had long passed away; he could, however, almost readily point out the resting places of nearly all, simple or gentle, who had died in the parish during the last fifty years; and wanderers who had been long absent in foreign lands, upon their return had only to apply to Stephen to be shown the grave of a father, or a mother, which no other person could, perhaps, discover.

Miss Meade was very partial to old Stephen, he was as gentle and submissive as a child, and was always pleased when she asked him to do her a service. In one respect, he was very useful to her. She was passionately fond of music, and was acknowledged to be one of the finest or-

ganists within the bounds of several counties. Indeed, good judges had often asserted that all she had to do was to go to London to secure a high position as a performer on that instrument; at all events, it might be truly said, that, owing to her splendid execution on the organ, her father's congregation had been more regular in attendance at church than they would have been if left only to the attraction of his best sermon, or to the more rapid or grandiloquent ones of the rector or bishop. Her most thrilling effects on that instrument were, however, made when she was alone, or at least when no one was present in the old church but herself and Stephen; and whenever she felt troubled or dispirited, she would wait up until almost all in Pendell had retired, and then call upon him. Stephen would open the church, and attend her were it midnight; and when he had learned that she did not wish to have it known that she practised or played thus privately, he kept the matter a secret—even from old Sarah—and the few who chanced to hear the organ at late hours, quickly circulated the report that the exquisite midnight music was produced in the sanctuary by some supernatural agency, or by the wandering ghosts of the monks of other days.

A short time after sunset, Miss Meade left Sarah's cottage, but before she went away, she beckoned to old Stephen, and when he got to the open door, she whispered a few words in his ear; he slowly bent his head, as if in compliance with some request, and in a few hours afterward, when the night was dark, he stood just outside the porch of the old church, holding its heavy, rusted key. He had not been long there before Miss Meade came gliding along the grave-bordered pathway. Not a word was spoken; she merely put her hand quietly upon his shoulder, the massive, worn door then swung slowly upon its grating hinges; and they both went into the dimness of the silent sanctuary.

Had some spirit of a sainted martyr entered the venerable building to invoke divine aid, no pleading petition

could be more tender or affecting than the pathetic sounds which were now audible; had some poor tortured heretic been bending before a cruel inquisition, there could be heard no more tremulous appeal for mercy. There came with those same sad sounds, the weeping of woe, the depths of despair, the sobbing of the sorrowful, the hopeless beseeching of the condemned, and the very groans of the dying; and then the shout of the bigot, the fury of the fanatic, and the crash of destruction, rushed wildly along aisle and chancel, and thundered in every vacant cell and empty vault. After a solemn pause, there then followed the mourner's prayer, touching and exquisite, closing with the soft voices of angels, which gradually died away in whispers of peace and hope for the wounded heart.

The church was again closed; old Stephen plodded slowly homeward. Of what has he been thinking? had those angel voices touched his heart? for before he entered his humble abode, he had more than once to wipe away the tears which had suffused his eyes.

By this time the night had grown somewhat stormy, and Esther Meade, feeling rather discomposed, was led by her adventurous spirit down to her favorite station at the Bay. To see the ocean in its wildest state, was to her at all times a magnificent sight, and now her eyes could be gratified to the fullest extent. The wind had greatly increased, and the upheaval of distant billows could be seen along the troubled line of the horizon; the light-house, away out, being sometimes scarcely visible in the commotion. Now the hoarse dirge of the gale seemed to wail out from the bursting bosom of the deep; now there is a lull, and again the wind swells upon the ear like a melancholy cadence; the savage surf is heard like the clash of cymbals; and the rush of water along the shore or into numerous caves, comes like distant voices, or resounding echoes. Amid this wild chorus of sounds, Miss Meade almost fancied herself in attendance at a grand concert of thousands; and the tall, beacon tower, with its

revolving light, seen looming up at times among the breakers, was then to her like the conductor of the immense orchestra, swinging his baton of flame while beating time for the waves.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MISSIONARY WANTED.

A DREARY plain, almost a desert plain, in Winter a wild waste, bleak and inhospitable; in Summer time brown, arid and dusty; a few stunted or withered looking trees here and there; scarcely a shrub, or a green herb, and very little grass to be seen, scanty shade or cover for man or beast; no clear stream to invite the thirsty traveler, but stagnant pools in deep, muddy pits, with slushy margins, disfigured the surface of heathy ground, giving the whole an unsightly appearance. A wild place where one would fancy that thieves, or Thugs, might roam with impunity. A place for robbery, or a place for murder; and a place where no doubt these crimes had been committed. On the north, in the distance, this wide plain was bounded by rising ground, near which were several wretched looking huts, inhabited by human beings apparently the most squalid and destitute. At first view one would suppose the men to be the veriest savages, the women the most degraded, and the children, ragged and filthy, the most forsaken. Poverty, ignorance, superstition, and crime, seemed to have reduced them to the lowest condition, and to have left the darkest impress upon the people and their surroundings; and a pious humanitarian upon visiting these outcasts, might readily imagine that he was in some far off, benighted land, among a brutal race, where life was insecure; among the lowest caste of men, with whom worship, if such were ever known, was

but riotous bloodshed; among idolaters, where the deep ruts of the car wheels of Juggernaut could be seen on the highways, or a rude temple be discovered sheltering the hideous form of some pagan god; or where some foul den might be found in which human beings were offered in sacrifice. Here, he might surely say, there is not only ample scope for missionary exertions, but for charitable efforts in which the bodily wants alone should be considered as possessing a paramount claim, for the apparent barbarism and destitution of the people can hardly be exceeded upon any part of the habitable globe.

Yet one would think that the surprise of such philanthropist should be great when he remembered that this land was a Christian land, and that the savages before him were accounted a Christian people; that he was standing, not in the wilds of Africa, but upon the very soil of Old Britain, where Christianity had been carefully fostered by generations of kings and rulers for over a thousand years; where a priesthood—a legion—wealthy and influential, were still employed and lavishly paid, to propagate Christian doctrines; and where Christian churches were very numerous, the greater number of which being richly endowed by the State.

Partly as an evidence of this, a few miles to the south, the grey tower of Pendell church could be dimly seen; and further, in the opposite direction, away beyond the high ground, the steeple of Betnall parish appeared, faint as a shadow, above the tall trees that bounded the view. Still the Heath, or “Devil’s Dale,” as it was commonly called, with its savage inhabitants, was not for some reason, included within the boundaries of either Pendell or Betnall parish; it had once been, and in fact still was, part of a large confiscated estate belonging to some lordly freebooter, who, for some vile or special service, had it granted to him by some pious monarch, and this estate was then as exempt from the payment of ordinary rates and assessments as if it had been the property of an archbishop. But in the course of time, after years of extrava-

gance and dissipation, other taxes or claims had accumulated, over which the king had no control, and a host of creditors, as a last resource, had placed their claims in Chancery, and, once within its gripe, Chancery had drained the revenue of the estate; had let its broad acres grow wild and barren, its manor house tumbled almost to ruins, had harassed more than one heir expectant to the grave, and had scattered the impoverished serfs and retainers to their only refuge on the bleak heath, where they and their descendants, despised and neglected, had long become outlaws and vagabonds.

As it was, neither Betnall, nor Pendell, was willing to admit the Heath was within its parochial limits; neither did the authorities of either parish wish to be burdened with additional paupers from among the irreclaimable thieves and cut throats of "Devil's Dale," still, as a matter of self-protection, something had to be done to limit, and, if possible, to prevent the incursions of such vagabonds, and by united effort, with aid from other quarters, a kind of prison, or place of torture, called a workhouse or poorhouse—an institution of benevolence rather common in England—was erected on a convenient boundary not far from the limits of the Heath, and such of the wild race as had the temerity to wander towards Betnall or Pendell, either as aged or infirm mendicants, or as adventurers to poach or to pilfer, were too well watched to be always able to escape detection, and, once in the clutches of certain officials, little pity was shown; for if they of the Heath could not be convicted as thieves, they were generally imprisoned as vagrants, and unmercifully dealt with as a warning to others. So the pious, the orderly, and the prominent inhabitants of the two parishes, generally treated their rude neighbors with the greatest indifference or contempt, and these neighbors, feeling in turn that they were despised, and that civilization had as yet only offered them the refuge of a prison and the status of criminals, felt aggrieved and resentful, and took every opportunity of returning evil for evil, and of committing depre-

dations, great or trivial, as time, place, and circumstances permitted.

It was evident, therefore, that a feeling of dislike or hostility on one side, had engendered a similar feeling on the other, and they of the Heath, for a particular reason, in one respect, did not evince any anxiety whatever to be patronized by either parish, or to press a claim for legal recognition as being the parishioners of any place; for, isolated as they were, like a community of bandits or outlaws, and almost totally indifferent as to any duty or responsibility they might owe to king or country, they felt exempt from the payment of any kind of rates or taxes, and any attempt ever made to collect such from them was unsuccessful; and, as any effort of the kind would be quite useless, they lived, and struggled, and wrangled, and starved, and died in their own peculiar way; few, indeed, ever caring to know more about them than that they were kept domiciled as far as possible within the bounds of the dreary Heath or Devil's Dale. Besides, having the native inhabitants, the Heath had others also, it was the resort of refugees from justice from all quarters; and gypsies and other wanderers, often found their way to the wild region, and must have had a rude welcome, as they frequently remained long enough to indicate that they were not treated as intruders, or despoiled of any of the scanty wares which they bartered here and there for a living. Sometimes people from the adjoining parishes would pay a kind of holiday visit to the Heath to see the "wild folk," just with the same kind of curiosity that would lead others to enter a menagerie to see wild beasts; but those who went to the Heath, went at their own risk, and often had to return minus a watch, a knife, a handkerchief, or other articles of greater or less value; those who were lucky enough to escape the fingers of a thief, often went home with cut or torn or spattered clothes, as an evidence of the enmity that existed against the respectable outer world; and it was not only darkly hinted, but once in a while spoken openly, that some had

recklessly entered the Heath who were never known to have returned.

Notwithstanding this state of things, a few persons, who were traders, and a few such as Mr. Meade and his daughter, who really commiserated the condition of the people of the Heath, and who had given evidence of a friendly desire to do something for their benefit, went occasionally amongst them, and though received coldly or with indifference, were not molested. The great missionary societies of Britain had never made any serious attempt to rescue these people from the barbarism into which they had been plunged. Home missions may, no doubt, have been considered altogether too commonplace. There was something piously romantic in a Reverend hero of the Cross wandering far over sea and land, to make eloquent signs to dusky, well-fed savages in Africa, or in an endeavor to make his frail attempts at Sanscrit or Bengalee, understood by educated Hindoos on "India's coral strand;" but for a man of ability to be pent up in a wild moor, and to spend time and talents simply in order to Christianize his own brethren, fellow-countrymen at home, was too unostentatious to be ranked as "missionary," and too monotonous to invoke the true missionary spirit. The heathen, thousands of miles away, were supposed to be in much greater need of missionary attention, and heathen lands were said to be the proper missionary field; for it had been argued that a class like those of the Heath, who lived in a Christian country, and who could be even indirectly benefitted or controlled by the influence of a Christian community, were not at all so much in need of spiritual aid as the destitute in far heathen lands, who had never heard of the Bible, and who had not the healthy every day example of Christian believers before them. Still something by way of religious instruction had been attempted on the Heath. An obscure body of Methodists called Ranters, after many trials and much perseverance and persuasion, had succeeded in impressing some of the people with the idea

that they were leading wicked lives, and that if they refused the Gospel, their sufferings in another state of existence would be many fold greater than the toils and poverty and wretchedness in this life. So, after awhile, a "society" had been formed, and a small chapel erected; and as the preachers of this sect were rather illiterate and unpretending, they went among the "wild folk," no doubt with the best intentions, and as if only their equals in humble position; and their peculiar threats and appeals—generally used by Methodist sects—had such an effect upon the credulity and ignorance of the rude people, that many became so "religious" that noisy demonstrations of worship could be often heard far and near on the wide plain.

The barbarians of the Heath being, however, thoroughly ignorant, could not really understand, or at all appreciate the so-called "simple doctrines" which were preached; these not only bewildered the stupid souls to whom they had been presented, but led to angry arguments as to their meaning, and thus perplexed these boors soon grew tired of the religious novelty, and their pious, but rather wild excitement, gradually died away. Certain acts of the ranting exhorters had somehow dissatisfied many of their new converts, who had formed the opinion that these exhorters were in many respects as fallible and as exacting in their way as other preachers in higher social position; besides, instead of a free gospel, demands had been made very often for money for various religious purposes. The preacher, too, had to get something for his support; something had to be given for the circulation of the bible—though few on the Heath had read, or could even read a line of it—and aid was required for missionaries away in foreign lands. The trifle asked or given was, however, a great sum to people who seldom handled a shilling; so they of the Plain feeling themselves miserably poor, and having a greater share of pity, rough as it was, for their own destitute children than for exhorters or foreign heathens, looked with distrust or indifference upon the

preachers. Sunday was made a day of gloom, and as they had been warned against indulging in the sports and recreations to which they had been accustomed, they soon fell back into their old habits, and in a short time the great majority of the converted abandoned the chapel for their old resort, the low tavern or drinking house that had long been established amongst them; here, they thought, they could feel more social than any where else, and the rude joviality which occasionally took place made them often forget the toil that was before them; and if they slept an hour after the effects of a pint of drugged beer, they felt more satisfied than if they had to sleep an hour under a drowsy sermon, very little of which they could comprehend.

This low place and a smaller drinking den of the same kind, were the only resorts on the Heath that supplied beverages for the inhabitants, and he or she who could spare a penny out of the groat that had been amassed in this impoverished region, was sure to seek solace with it at the tavern. These haunts were the central spot for scenes of drunken sports, brawls and dissipation; and here it was where matches were made for wrestling, and for feats of strength or agility, and where challenges were given for brutal fights, in which kicking, biting, and foul, and often deadly blows, were legitimate methods of battering, and pounding, and disfiguring the human body in the most terrible manner; and then there were cock fights, and dog fights, and, by way of change of sport, fathers, and even mothers, backed their sons—from eight to fifteen years old—in combat with children of the same age, the sons of others, and the fights between cocks and dogs, and children, often, indeed almost always, led to combats between the respective owners or parents, and on such occasions the whole plain might well be called the “Devil’s Dale,” and the people the veriest fiends.

The precarious livelihood of mostly all of these people was earned by almost incessant labor, and by employment in which children of tender years were forced to assist to the

utmost of their strength. The women, too, had not only to manage household matters, but to spend most of their time among rude, indecent men at heavy work, which was not only sufficient to break down the strongest constitution, but to dwarf and deform the children engaged therein; and the almost total disregard paid to difference of sex, led to what would be called the greatest demoralization. As it was, coarse, drunken men seemed to tyrannize over women, and men and women, as if anxious to lighten their own labor, compelled mere children, by rude and indecent threats, and often by blows, to do the most slavish work, fit only for strong and active men.

Not far from the long row of huts or dwellings on the Heath, and close to a wide, deep pit, were several low, rickety sheds; some of them were sparingly thatched, or covered with straw, others with a kind of matting, and others with rough tiles. Under these sheds were piles of clay moulded into the shape of bricks, and left to dry, previous to their being placed in the kiln. A number of women and children were in one of the pits; some of them stood with bare feet in the thick, muddy water up to the ankles. The women dug the clay and shoveled it into barrows that the larger boys and girls wheeled slowly away to a place where men and women, and some children were actively treading the clay into soft, sticky mud to prepare it for the moulders. Such of the children as were not strong enough to wheel the barrow, carried baskets of clay upon their heads, and if they stopped on the way to rest for a minute or two, they were shouted at and sometimes struck by men and women, who seemed determined to force them to do all the work they could possibly perform. The laborers were covered with dirt and mud, and the children's hair was matted with clay, and there were scabbed and bleeding sores on their heads, faces and feet; and several were so much covered with the dry, adhesive mud, as to have their very features hidden. In another part of the plain was the entrance to a coal pit, in the murky depths of which the toilers—mostly men and

boys—were hidden from the outer world for dreary periods of from fifteen to twenty hours at a time; and here, too, women and children were obliged to labor, carrying coal in barrows and buckets until painfully wearied; and the continued toil, in all quarters, from dawn until dark, and during all kinds of weather, so fagged and wearied the unfortunate people, that the strongest stimulants were too often craved by men and women, more eagerly than food; and children, instead of thinking of sport or play, were glad, in their periods of leisure, to drop asleep on the wet, muddy, black ground, and forget their premature sufferings.*

The mud huts, or houses of the heathen population, were only such as would give to a civilized person the most dreary idea of domestic comfort. Each hut was but a single filthy apartment. The rain often came through the wretched roof, and as there were but few huts which had a chimney, or even a hole left for a window, the smoke had to make its exit through the open door, or the best way it could. There was nothing that could be called furniture; a rough stool or bench, and a few of the most simple cooking utensils might be found in some of the dwellings, but the greater number of them had neither bedstead nor table, nor even a stool; and the wretched, wearied inmates, after having partaken of the most scanty and unwholesome food, were compelled at night to huddle together promiscuously, in great discomfort, on the wet or damp ground floor, to find such rest as nature might fortunately bestow, after their many hours of the most severe toil.

But there were others on the Heath who managed to escape the misery of such slavish labor—a class who could not see any virtue in industry where poverty was its reward. These were the thieves, the poachers, and the robbers of the plain, who regularly visited the adjoining parishes, and, evading bailiffs and detectives, generally

* See Note 1 in the Appendix.

returned with sufficient plunder, in the shape of game, domestic fowl, sheep or lambs, clothing, or any article that they could stealthily lay hands on, and, if the plunder was abundant, it was freely shared among the more destitute of the Heath; and then there was a period of feasting and revelry for many.

It would not only be a useless, but a dangerous attempt for any officer of justice to follow a culprit to the Heath; a summons, warrant, proclamation, or an authoritative order of any kind, would be only laughed at. Once safely back among his confederates, the thief might hurl defiance at his pursuers, for he was sure to find ready refuge and protection; and the sharpest detective could neither, by threats nor prayers, obtain the least information, either to identify the fugitive or lead to an arrest; and if even an arrest were made, should the officer of the law, with a dozen aids, if he had them, persist in trying to take away his prisoner, he and his assistant were sure to be maltreated most brutally—in any case they would be severely abused—and the mob of lawless villians, by whom they were surrounded, would not hesitate a moment to take life—even the lives of all if necessary—rather than yield one victim up to unmerciful magistrates; for the poor wretches of the plain entertained the opinion that they were somehow injured and oppressed, and kept in a state of want, and almost in a state of slavery, by pious and respectable society generally; and the minions of the law were not only looked upon as agents of gross oppression, but were accounted no higher in the estimation of most of those half-wild barbarians, than a highwayman or murderer would be held among civilized people. Believing, therefore, that they had been wronged and robbed by the wealthy and powerful around them, they felt it a duty to despoil in return—in fact, to be revenged; and often, indeed, when they went out for plunder, if nothing could be more readily found, they would strip the clothes from children; and, if a chance offered, even kidnap the children themselves. And for years there had been perishing

little slaves on the plain, who had forgotten their parents; and there were parents, far and near, who bewailed their children. There was oppression and distress in the land, which the law had not remedied; there was revenge and blood which the law could not well reach. There were tears and suffering which well to do society had overlooked; and there was a plague spot of poverty, superstition, and crime, in the very heart of old England, which rich missionary societies had neglected, in their hot zeal to lavish pious funds among well-fed Pagans, or to mitigate imaginary evils in the malarious climates of distant lands.*

* See Note 2.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BRITISH HEATHEN.

IF a tired traveler on some dreary desert were anxiously seeking rest from long fatigue, or shelter from a sudden storm, he might hesitate to enter the only place of refuge that offered if it were as dingy, unclean, and suspicious in appearance as the "Rook's Nest," which was the name of one of the drinking houses on the Heath; and if he were possessed of a watch or a sum of money which he wished to keep in his possession, he might further hesitate, and would most likely prefer to take his chance beneath a gloomy sky or under a threatening cloud, than enter such a nest at a late hour, or trust the black brow and scowling aspect of the thick-set, wolfish looking fellow who was the landlord and occupant of the dilapidated two-storied brick fabric, over whose battered front door was nailed a piece of board, upon which some rare and learned genius of the plain had succeeded in carving out two significant words thus— "Rook's Nest." Then, if the same traveler in his wistful search should move towards the other old building across the way, and see its dirty entrance, its broken windows, and see its rough, projecting sign, that probably the same artist had lettered, "The Bull Dog," he might quickly turn away in despair from a place of promise so doubtful, when he also saw the stupid look and heavy features of the half drunken, one-eyed host who sat like some unclean beast in a foul den waiting for his prey.

These were the two inns, or rather drinking houses, of

the Heath, and the great places of resort for nearly its entire population. The Rook's Nest, being the larger of the two, was the haunt of those principally engaged at work in the mines, and its name was somewhat appropriate, every one of its customers being almost as black in appearance as the veritable rooks themselves. The "Bull Dog," on the other hand, was chiefly patronized by the laborers of the brick yards, who were more rough in manner, and more willing to get drunk and quarrel, than, perhaps, those who favored the other house; and though each of these resorts had its own particular class of customers, it was common for them to mingle at either place to drink, to wrangle, or to fight, as the mood of the hour chanced to direct.

It was Sunday morning—not a day of rest or recreation for all on the Plain—and nearly church time; for the faint sound of the bells of Betnall parish could be heard now and then in the clear, calm air. A number of laborers who had been at work from an early hour in the clay pits, had just strolled one after another towards their respective huts, "just to clean oop a bit," that is to rinse a portion of the mud from their faces and hands in dirty water. Several of the children were still kept busy piling unburnt bricks under the sheds, while a few other children—the sickly and worn out—were stretched listlessly here and there on the bare ground, as if anxious for rest that should be unbroken forever. By degrees a number of squalid looking laborers, men and women—squalid and ragged even in their Sunday attire—had assembled in the small, filthy tap room of the Bull Dog. In a short time the place became crowded; the day was warm, and the cloud of tobacco smoke that filled the place seemed to discompose none but the myriads of flies that were buzzing around, or diving into the clammy pewter mugs which were very seldom polished. The rough people who had entered appeared in a hurry to commence the day's carousal by first swallowing the strongest stuff that Ned Bogg could hand over his counter; and Ned, with his one

blinking eye seemed to watch every drop as if willing to give only scrupulous measure to his craving customers. One might think he was dispensing to a diseased set some precious elixir of life, instead of the very essence of death.

"Oy," said one fellow after wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, "that's a rare un yer got Ned, whoy thur will choake the bitch at th' Rook's in less than a minnit."

"Thut she wull lud," replied the landlord, "she's a rare un, sure enough; an I'll lay an extra croon that she'll lay oop the Rook's' beauty within 'alf an oor, and Tom Slaughter will lose another wager. Well, damn un, I'd loike t'let un lose a poond or more; and thoo'll do it, my lady." Here Ned Bogg, the aforesaid landlord, lifted on his counter a great, ugly bull slut, and patted her as affectionately as his course nature would permit, while his gazing customers were delighted. He had got this brute as a rare present; she had been stolen a short time previously from a farmer a few miles distant, and Ned had sent a challenge to his rival, Tom Slaughter, the landlord of the Rook's Nest, who had another dog of the same kind. Heavy bets had been made on the dogs, and great sport was expected.

"Whoy Bob, thees back brave un! What's the look?" All eyes were now turned upon the man who had just entered. Bob Cuffer, who had been so addressed by the landlord, was a noted poacher, or rather thief; he had been "out" with felonious intent as usual, and had only returned a few hours previously, with some plunder and some news, of which all present seemed eager to have a share. Bob's news was almost as welcome as the spoil which he was willing to divide among those who had greatest need. He was a daring, able bodied chap, ready for a bout with a bailiff or a detective, and as he had never been "trapped" by either one or the other, or known to come off second best in an encounter with any who had been on the look out for him, he was a favorite; and the relation of his adventures whenever he returned had all

the attractions of a romance for his lawless associates on the Heath.

"What's th' look?" continued the landlord, who handed Bob a glass of the strongest liquor, which was drunk off in a moment. "Ise glad thee's coom to meet Jack Clench, I wood'na vur a poodnd hav un say that you went off an wur afeard to coom to time."

"Oi beant afeard uv Jack Clench, nor noother mun, an he knows it." Bob Cuffer, when he said this, swaggered like a bully from side to side, and held out one of his big arms in defiance.

"Hoy, Bob! but thee's got a coot on th' yarm. Hast had a scuffle with any t' oodside?" said the landlord.

There was a wound on the man's arm, but Bob, looking at it with indifference, replied:

"Yes mun, I got into cloutches wi' big Jones, the bailiff, an iv he gav me that scratch wi' a pistol ball, I gav him a broke skull wi' a big stun as big as his yed. I laid un low, that I did, an he'll maybe get boxed oop an in aud Steeve's care i' th' Pendell choorch yard afore anoother week. He won't trooble me again, he won't.

The fellow chuckled at his vile exploit, and his savage hearers uttered a chorus of approval in anticipation of the death of the unfortunate bailiff. Treating the event as a matter of no importance, the landlord filled out another glass for Bob and inquired the news.

"Oy," said Bob, "but I maun show you the swag first. I got this watch, and there's his pistol, too, dam un; I gav uncle Jo his coat an boots." These were things which he had taken from the bailiff; and the pistol and watch were handed around to satisfy the curiosity of those present. He then told them that he had been all through Pendell and Betnall, that he had been at the rector's place, and had picked up some clothes and other things in an outhouse; "an see here," said he uncovering a small basket which hung on his arm, "here's one o' the rector's tennants that never paid un ony toythes," and Bob laughed heartily.

Crouched in the basket was a valuable game cock, one of a rare breed, great to fight, for which parson Rockett, rector of Betnall, and magistrate for the county, had paid a high price, in order to afford amusement, and sometimes profit, to himself and a few chosen friends who delighted in testing to the utmost the fighting qualities of such birds when a chance offered; in fact the rector and his select friends—being all wealthy and of course respectably pious—were as fond of this kind of sport as they were of horse racing, or of following the hounds. Bob Cuffer who was also partial to feathers, and who prided himself in being as good a judge of game cocks as any rector in the kingdom, saw the parson's prize, and determined that it should be his own; so here was the bird to produce unbounded admiration; and Bob, who felt that this act of relieving the parson was one of the most meritorious kind, was the hero of the hour. Some laughed to think how the rector would deplore his loss, and demand the arrest of the unknown "beak hunter," while others were perhaps speculating in their own stupid way whether the sermon which the rector might preach that day in Betnall church would be one on charity and forgiveness, or whether its text and burden would be, in conformity with his every day practice towards the sinners of the Heath, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

After having related some of his minor adventures during his raid into the parishes, Bob Cuffer gave his eager hearers some of the news. "Nance Carey, hur that was in for a vamp' i' th' woorkhooose, smothered her young un, an then tried to set fire t' th' place; there was th' deevil to pay amoong them, an all were cursing Nance; an noo she'll be lagged surely, oonless we get hur oot sum way. An' Dick Vance, him that got hur th' kid, has coot and run off, cause Rockett gav a warrant ver un. Little mercy vur Nance i' th' parson's prison; Rockett aint purtickler hoo he deals wi' oor kind i' th' woorkhooose.

"Rockett!" exclaimed one of the women, "whoy wen his maid throost hur twins i' th' doong pit, the parson

hooshed it oop, an helped hur wi' cash to gan off; but seems th' rector knew more'n he ought to as who th' father uv th' babbies was; seems his wife knew more'n she cared vur too, an she hooried th' wench away."

"Oy," said another woman, "'twere caus th' babbies wur his'n; an 'twant the foorst lass that he sarved th' loike, and mayhap woont be the last oonless his wife can keep a watch on un better; but he don't care vur she, he'd bung hur eyes iv she said a woord."

"Wull let th' parson go vur a bit," resumed Bob Cuffer, "he's noot else to do arter he prays an feeds o' Sunday, an more'n I knows vur what he sent his maid off, but av he hurts Nance vur dooin once, what he knows lots o' th' great uns oop in Loonun doos a' th' time, we maun call an see im sum night when th' moon's abed." This threat against the rector was well received, and Bob then spoke on in the matter of news. "The chap they calls th' bishoop oot o' Loonun, or sum oother great place, is a coomin doon t' th' parishes, an Rockett an a whole lot o' parson chaps will be along t' convarm—yes, t' convarm; that maun be it."

"Convarm? what's that," exclaimed one.

"Whoy, I dunno," said Bob, scratching his head rather reflectively, "it's t' convarm i' th' choorch, they sez. They gets, I b'lieve, a lot o' maids an chaps drest oop loike t' gan t' th' choorch, and then they gavs em summat vur a dance at th' gloamin; and then this ere bishoop an th' parson chaps puts off vur th' rector's an has a goort veed o' wittles, an arter that they takes summat to drink; and they all gans t' anoother choorch' and begins again loike."

"Convarm, oy I know it now," said the landlord, fancying that he had made a discovery. "I'll joost convarm my bitch here again ony that th' bishoop brings vrom Loonun or oot else. I'll wage on thee, lass; that I will," and he again patted the bull slut, on the counter.

"I aint sure that's it," said Bob Cuffer—"it may be—but he wont coom here to convarm or fight wi th' deevil

hissel, or th' bitch either; or any other on th' plain. But, hark, I've got oother news vur all,' and then lowering his voice a little, he said, "ther's one will coom doon here soon, one's that's not a parson, nor a rect'r, nor noot oot kind, but i' furriner, a cove vrom far abroad, that's coom herr t' buy oop all this land; and he's bought it vur sartin; the aud manor hoose, an all the aud estate o' Mayston, an he'll coom here sure, an mayhap pull doon th' Rook's Nest, an turn oot th' rooks, and level this aud Bull Dog house t' th' groond, an pull doon everything, an hoont us all off vur varmin—that's what th' rect'r, you know, calls we, *varmin*—an we'll all ha vt' gan off t' th' woorkhouse, or off wi th' gypsies."

This part of the news caused no little excitement. There was a storm of oaths, and there were threats of fierce defiance, which were not mere idle threats; but which, to carry out, every man, and many of the women present, would have risked life or limb; and were it necessary, many of them would be then and there ready to apply the torch, or to use the knife or the bullet in defence of the title which they considered they had to the Heath by virtue of long possession.

In a few minutes, when the explosion of anger had nearly passed, Bob Cuffer went on to relate how he got his information. He said that, when passing through Pendell, he had met old Stephen—who was regarded even as a friend by all on the Heath—and that Stephen had told him that a stranger had called at old Sarah Afton's cottage, to make some inquiries about Pendell and its neighborhood, and about some of its old inhabitants, and about some also who had been long dead; that Sarah had sent the stranger to Stephen, and that they both went together to the Pendell grave yard to try and find an old family tombstone, so old that even Stephen himself was unable to make the discovery. The stranger had a book—a chronicle of Pendell—which he cousulted from time to time. He then told Stephen to get him a spade, and, after a little time, he commenced to dig in a distant and over-

grown corner of the grave yard close to the angle of the wall, and that when he had cleared away nearly a foot in depth from the surface, he uncovered a marble slab. The date and most of the letters on it being nearly worn away, could not be made out, but the name, "Jean Vaillant," and a cross with the usual monogram, thus—I. H. S.—having been cut deeper than the other words or letters, could be plainly seen. This was the name of an ancestor of the stranger's, and he copied it into his book. He then told Stephen that he had come from India to purchase the old Mayston estate, which he said had belonged to their ancestor, and that he would soon take possession and make some improvements. Before he left he rewarded Stephen handsomely, and though the old sexton did not yet know the name of his benefactor, he seemed to think that there was something superior about him, and that his residence at Pendell would make things vastly better.

While Bob Cuffer was giving this relation, a gypsy woman, who chanced to pass outside near the door, was seen to become agitated when she heard mention of the name that was found on the slab in the grave yard; she then stood and appeared to listen attentively to what Bob was saying, and when he had ended, she asked him to repeat the name which the stranger had discovered. After this, she was seen to hurry off, as with the news, toward a gypsy camp, which was at some distance on the plain.

"Better or no better," said the landlord, "iv he cooms here t' distoorb us, it maun be at his own risk—we'll soon do vur un—an he main be glad to get off afore we lave un woorse than Bob left the bailee."

"Oy let un coom iv he dares," said three or four together, "we'll kick the goots oot un." Half a dozen others made similar expressions.

"Keep o shut mooth, luds, oontil he cooms," said Bob Cuffer, standing out before them all, "I'll keep an eye on un—I don't troost un a bit; an' iv he's ony uv th' damned

pars'n tribe, or a friend o' Rockett's, I'll lay he woon't trooble us long."

A number of men from the Rook's inn then entered; more liquor was demanded, and Ned Bogg's eye glistened again while he was measuring out the fiery fluid. Among others that then came was Jack Clench, Bob's antagonist, a stout fellow like Bob himself. Both looked smiling and defiant, and they had a glass together, as if to certify before all that they were prepared to meet that day in fair fight. Several persons could now be seen around here and there with cocks and dogs; there was quite a collection of these animals. The day's sport was about to begin and all seemed eager to witness the usual scenes of cruelty and blood, quite indifferent as to whether those scenes of recreation should close with the death of a dog, or the death of a human being.

CHAPTER X.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN HEATHEN.

THE gypsy woman who hurried away from the inn after she had heard Bob Cuffer give an account of his interview with old Stephen at Pendell, went on moodily towards the gypsy camp. This was situated on a distant part of the Heath where the scattered trees afforded some little shade. The camp was composed of a number of huts and a few tents. These huts were much better than those occupied by the plodding laborers at the brick yards; there was some show of neatness around the dwellings, even a few flowers could be seen. Among the tents was one a little removed from the rest, into which the gypsy woman entered. This person was called Maheel, and was known on the plain as the gypsy lady. She was in the prime of life, reputed to be of superior caste, and might have been called handsome were it not for her very dark skin, her restless eye, and the sinister expression which seemed at times to disfigure her features, that were otherwise almost perfect. Though the period of her residence on the Heath had been but a few weeks, yet she already possessed some influence with the wandering people, and was deferred to by many. She must have had some means of support, for she engaged in no kind of employment, but why she came, or why she remained, perplexed even the gypsies themselves.

Squatted in a corner of the tent, was Zingari, a venerable gypsy woman, whose age was said to be over a hund-

red years. Her hair was perfectly white, her face—once perhaps beautiful—was wrinkled and sallow, but her black eyes were intelligent, and though now sunken, had even still much of the lingering fire of youth. The whole tribe regarded her with reverence, for they believed that none could equal her in dealing in mysteries and forestalling events; and certain strangers from the parishes would sometimes venture to call for such information as they believed she alone could give. It was with this old woman that Maheel for some reason preferred to reside. She was attentive to the aged occupant, who was however strangely reserved even towards her; and they had little communication with others.

Old Zingari sat knitting a kind of woolen garment, and while thus engaged she was humming a wild but melancholy air, to which the younger woman, while looking vacantly at the busy fingers of the other, was apparently listening; and though no words were heard, the air itself seemed to have a depressing effect upon the listener.

After some hesitation Maheel stooped and whispered a few words in a strange tongue. The old woman did not even look up, she became silent, as if she had forgotten her sad strain. In a few moments she slowly replied—“Better for thee not to hear my words.”

“Thy speech, Zingari, will be now most welcome—thou can’st explain; besides I long to know what of my past or future thou perchance can’st read. What of that ancient name; to whom did it belong?”

“I know the name, Maheel, it is of one long dead; but there’s a living man to claim it still—and him thou knowst.”

Maheel seemed disconcerted and whispered to her again, and again Zingari replied: “Guilt breeds more terror than the whirlwind. Why dreads the worshiper of *Kali*?”*

“Nay, Zingari, Maheel will worship only *Christna*, the beautiful *Christna*, the son of the virgin *Devanaguy*.”

* The wife of Siva.

"But Christna, the benevolent, is pleased with no sacrifice of blood, that cruel rite is for Siva, and for Moses; and it is the hope of the benighted Christian."

"I have no hope in such a rite, Zingari, my hope and trust are, like thine own, in Christna."

"Sayst thou in blessed Christna! Hath not the daughter of a Brahmin become a Christian and a Pariah? Better for her to be even of the *Devadassas* † in the temple of Siva."

"Why thus thy speech, Zingari? Blood of sacred beast or of human being I've never shed. My richest offerings are for Christna, who will come again."‡

"Believest thou this? And hast thou still thy caste? Stay! Let me see thy hand." Here the old gypsy took Maheel's hand, and after having looked closely at the palm, said: "The cross hath touched thine hand, not as an ancient symbol of our race, but as the token of thine apostacy. There is no blood mark here as yet, but there's a stain I see almost as vile. Maheel! Thou hast stolen the blood of the living!"

The young gypsy woman started to her feet; she looked fiercely at old Zingari, who seemed to heed her not but re-commenced her knitting; and soon again her humming voice was heard, and words were now muttered with the wild strain, as if of prophetic meaning.

Maheel, apparently stupified, stood listening at the entrance of the tent; and now, like one affrighted, she watched the shadow of a great cloud sweep across the plain, and onward toward one of the long sheds, in which several wearied children were seeking rest from the effects of the most inhuman toil. Under a sudden impulse, she rushed after the shadow until she reached the shed. Though stern and indifferent as she could be, her heart felt a touch of pity when she witnessed the sad condition

† Virgins attached to the service of the Brahminical Trinity in Pagodas and in Temples.

‡ The Hindoo religion teaches that Christna will appear again on earth, as the tenth Avatar of Vishnu, to conquer the prince of Demons, or Rakehasas, before the final destruction of all things.

of the overworked children. They lay around in rags—some almost in a state of nudity—and with scratched and bleeding limbs, upon which the dried mud was thick enough to crack in flakes. They all appeared to be in an utter state of prostration. A few of the more rugged slept; a few others were feverish and raving, while two or three were panting as if the last gasp was soon to close their sufferings. One boy, of about ten years, lay upon his back, his eyes were bloodshot, and now and then he would throw out his arms and cry pitifully for water. Near to him, a girl, scarcely his age, was huddled under a few rags, and lay quite still. Maheel looked at several of the little faces, as if anxious to recognize some one she knew; but the withered expression upon all had made every face strange. Once or twice she made bare an arm, as if to discover some mark, but each arm was too unclean or too much scratched or bruised to leave any ordinary mark distinguishable. She then approached the sleeping girl, and gently uncovered her face. She gazed a moment like one terror-stricken, and then shrieked and started back—the poor girl was dead.

As Maheel turned to leave the wretched place, she saw a little boy, who had just entered, stoop to wet the parched lips of the one who had been crying for water. There was something peculiar in his appearance; he might, at first view, be taken for some gypsy child, and might have passed for one, were it not that his hair was a dark brown and curly. As he held a dirty tin cup to the mouth of the boy, his bare brown right arm was exposed, and above the wrist, on the inside of this arm, a small circle or ring had been tattooed. When Maheel saw this, she grasped his arm, and looked closely at the mark. The boy seemed to know her at once, but without saying a word, she rushed away and retraced her steps to the tent of old Zingari.

It was about noon; the pious of the adjoining parishes were at their devotions, and the two inns on the Heath were well filled. The boors at the “Rook’s Nest” had

drunk their quota; and those at the "Bull Dog" were not behind in this respect. Matches and bets had been made, and most present were in a fair state of preparation for the enjoyment of their usual sport. Already several stout lads, precocious in villainy, had here and there been testing the fighting qualities of timid bantams, and training the vicious young of the canine kind to snuffle and yelp for blood. All, however, being now ready for greater feats of brutality, an open level space between the two inns was chosen. This was the usual arena for gladiatorial contests of all kinds, and here it generally was, that men—even sometimes women—boys, dogs and birds fought and battered and tortured one another on Sundays, to win trifling sums, or to gain the applause of a crowd of ruffians.

A rude fence encircled this space or ring, and after a few preliminaries, Bob Cuffer entered the enclosure with the game cock which he had stolen from parson Rockett, and offered to lay an extra crown that that bird would beat any other which could be produced. A stout miner from the "Rooks" took the bet, and set down a cock much more showy than the one in which Bob had such confidence. The crowd had pushed and pressed to the very edge of the ring, bets were boastingly renewed, the birds were set facing each other, and the fight began. At first the miner's bird, being the largest, seemed to have it all his own way; the other, however, held out best; he tore the comb and feathers from his antagonist; and, finally, amid shouts and jeers, drove him from the ring. The miner was so enraged at this, that he caught his panting bird, trampled it into the earth, and then flung the dead fowl into the face of one of the men who had bet against him. Both men, being angry and excited, like many around, struck each other, and a furious fight would have taken place, were it not for the interference of some who preferred to see regular sport, and who did not want such interrupted by a common hasty quarrel.

Ned Bogg, the landlord of the "Bull Dog," now came

forward with his great bull slut. His coarse visage and blinking eyes were forbidding by the eagerness of manner which he exhibited. A slut of similar appearance was brought on the ground by Tom Slaughter, the host of the "Rook's Nest." Tom felt confidence in his animal, and had bet heavily on her, and his clownish swagger and sinister aspect seemed suitable for the time and place. It may be well to state that these respected landlords made it a point to be always opposed to each other; and more than one trial of bodily strength and endurance had taken place between them, each bearing some permanent scar to remind him of his adversary; and Ned Bogg must bear to his grave such a memento, even the loss of an eye.

The unruly crowd of spectators again pushed and squabbled in their greed to witness the coming fray. In a short time word was given, and the dogs were let loose. The vicious brutes rushed together, and seized hold at once, each one pulling and tugging against the other. Now Ned would shout to encourage his animal; then Tom Slaughter would yell louder in defiance. Now one dog would come down, but to quickly rise and tumble the other; and the struggle was continued for several minutes, neither dog seeming to be the gainer. In order to give them fresh hold, the animals were separated by a great effort, and the maddened brutes, chafing in their blood, could with difficulty be held back. Tom Slaughter, growing more confident in the power or endurance of his favorite, taunted his opponent, and dared him to double the bets. Ned Bogg, quite enraged, took him up, and shouted that his slut, if she had but three legs, would be more than a match for Tom's bitch, with four. Tom's jeering reply only exasperated Ned, who, without saying a word, took hold of his own dog, and, having tumbled her, seized a short iron bar, and fiendishly snapped one of her hind legs.* This brutal act was applauded by sev-

* A similar act was once perpetrated at a dog fight in England; the owner chopped off his dog's leg with a butcher's cleaver.

eral, and the yelling, limping animal was again let loose, and again her savage instincts led her to snatch hold of her assailant. As it was, the maimed animal made a desperate struggle, as if indifferent to her terrible injury; but the fight was too unequal, and after a few fierce, but wild attempts, she gave way and tried to escape from the ring.

All at once there were shouts and threats and great confusion; the din of oaths and foul language was horrible. The landlords and their adherents dared one another; blows were struck, and the two principals stripped to fight, but the umpire, one of the miners, a powerful and determined looking fellow, named Harry Tamblin, with the aid of others, kept them apart, and, for over an hour, it required the greatest effort to prevent a general row, and to get the excitement sufficiently calmed to permit the chosen actors of the next bloody struggle to make their appearance.

All were again in waiting. The crowd had increased; a greater number of women and boys were among the spectators. Harry Tamblin, master of the ring—who was resolute for fair play—had completed his arrangements for the next hideous entertainment, and it was expected that the coming struggle would be the one most suitable for the expectant savages.

Two clownish looking men sprang briskly into the ring. One was Bob Cuffer, and the other was Jack Clench, a noted wrestler from the mines. Both were strong, active men, and had that acquired swagger indicative of the defiant bully. They were stripped to the waist. One wore great, heavy clogs, and the other had thick, hob-nailed shoes. This was the usual way in which pugilists and wrestlers on the Heath were shod as a preparation for "purring," which may be explained as the dextrous use of the feet in kicking the shins, breaking the ribs, punching out the eyes, or exposing the brains of an opponent.

Harry Tamblin now placed the men in the centre. They stood at ease, with arms folded, and wearing a smile

of indifference. The restless, scrambling crowd were once more pushed back, and the word was given to begin. The two men then coolly placed their hands on the bare shoulders of each other, and stood for a few moments on the alert. Then one gave a quick shove back, the other a sudden side jerk. These motions were repeated, each man being cool and guarded. Then there was jerking, and kicking, and already their shins were cut and bleeding. They then closed and seized each other round the body, and tried to twist and hook their legs; there was more kicking, and from their knees to their ankles was a mass of cuts, bruises, and blood; but the men being about an equal match, neither as yet fell. Bob Cuffer made desperate efforts to throw his man, but his wounded arm appeared to give him some trouble. His antagonist seemed to know this, and, after several attempts, he succeeded in giving Bob a heavy fall. The two men were now down, and they rolled, and tumbled, and kicked each other with savage ferocity; and now the furious struggle began to excite the bystanders. Bob Cuffer was still under, and he clenched his teeth first in the cheek, and next in the arm of his adversary, and held on to the bleeding flesh as if his life depended on the firmness of his hold. The other man partly raised himself, and commenced to kick Bob on the side, breast, and face, while his particular friends shouted, "Noos thees got 'im, Jack, go into 'im, lad; purr his yed, do; that's a good un; smash anoother rib vur im. Eh, Jack, shoort a great un, purr 'im, i' th' goots. Ha! he veels thee noo, Jack; go in, lad—that's it." *

The unfortunate man that was being thus brutally treated, still held on with his teeth, and Bob's friends would cry out, by way of encouragement, "Hold thee in to 'im, Bob, hold un, lad, hee'l soon give way, lad; keep thy moothful, that's a good un;" but a few more of the merciless kicks would have finished Bob, were it not that Harry Tamblin, who thought it was time to interfere, got

* See Note 3.

others to assist him in separating the combatants; and when they now stood before each other, the sight was revolting. Bob Cuffer was one mass of blood and bruises from his head to his feet. Three of his ribs had been broken; his left eye had been kicked out, and it hung by the tendons on his face. Jack Clench in appearance was almost as bad; a large hole was in his cheek, from which a piece had been bitten, and there was a terrible gaping wound on his arm, from which the blood flowed copiously. As the men stood yet defiantly before each other—a horrid spectacle—and evidently not unwilling to renew their savagery, the quick rattle of wheels was heard; all eyes were turned in one direction. A pair of horses and a carriage drove hurriedly up to the ring. Two persons were seated in the vehicle. Old Stephen's white hair and bent form, were at once recognized; the strange gentleman who had been driving, immediately sprang from his seat, and dashed into the centre of the ring. He got between the two bleeding wretches; he seized them both, and held them apart at arm's length, then quickly looking at them and those around him, his thrilling voice cried out aloud, "Are ye human beings, or devils?"

Was it the strange voice that had startled the young gypsy woman? Maheel had been out on the plain, and had seen the carriage approaching. Impelled by a singular feeling, she followed it closely, and as soon as she had a full view of the stranger, and had heard his voice, she started off as if in alarm, and once more entered the distant tent of Zingari.

CHAPTER XI.

JOHN VALIANT, A MISSIONARY.

THOSE who had been dwellers in the Heath during a life time of from sixty to seventy years or upwards, could fairly assert that they had never been more astonished at the daring of a complete stranger than they were at the conduct of the unknown man who now stood in the centre of the ring, and who not only reproved the combatants but sternly reproached those who stood around as spectators of the disgraceful struggle. The wild people looked at one another in amazement, scarcely believing the evidence of their senses. Many of them stood agape, quite undecided whether to act according to their usual impulse, and rob and maltreat, or give a death-blow to the officious intruder; while others around seemed as if awe struck by something which appeared too elevated and commanding in the stranger. One herculean woman who felt rather interested in Bob Cuffer, and who misunderstanding the motives of the unknown man, and under the influence of old hostility to outsiders, had raised a huge club and was about to strike down the unflinching mediator, but was held back by Harry Tamblin, who, though a kind of referee or leader among these people, was himself as much surprised as others at the deliberate manner in which the stranger proceeded after his first interference with the wretched champions. The wounded men seemed at once to recognize his good intentions, and they, as it were instinctively, obeyed him. He directed them to be

seated on the ground, and he carefully examined their injuries, while old Stephen from his seat in the carriage watched, like others, his proceedings with great interest. The strange Samaritan first attended to Bob Cuffer, who was in a bad condition, and like one possessed of the skill of a surgeon, he replaced his eye and bandaged his wounds with strips of linen or cotton now readily procured for him by some of the women. He next attended to Tom Clench, and with the aid of Harry Tamblin, who was now willing enough to assist, the two men were able to leave the ring. The waiting but suspicious crowd at last grew more satisfied; they had seen a generous act tenderly performed without fear or hope of reward, and after a while they began to think that the humane volunteer was neither an unfeeling detective, nor an enemy.

It may be here proper to give some account of this unexpected visitor. When William the Conqueror landed in England, among his followers from the French provinces, was one from Normandy, who had proved his devotion by many important services. William amply rewarded his true friends, and to this one in particular, he granted a large estate in England—the very one which included the Heath; and also recognizing his great merit as a soldier, he surnamed him *Vaillant*—Jean Vaillant. This appellation was readily adopted as a family name by the Norman soldier, and by his descendants for a long period; but in the course of time, as the French names *Tonnelier*, *Boulanger*, and *Meunier*, had become Cooper, Baker, and Miller, so Vaillant had become the English family name of Valiant, and has thus since remained.

Some time after the unexpected death of the Conqueror Jean Vaillant had been induced to join the Crusaders, but like thousands of other deceived fanatics who left home and country to attack the Saracens, he never returned from Palestine. His family, however, remained in England and his descendants for centuries held possession of the estate which had been granted by the king, until in the course of time, during a period of revolution, when trea-

son was rife, and when kingly tyrants and usurpers followed one another in quick succession, one of these royal plunderers had confiscated the land which had been given to the Norman soldier. The last of the Vaillants who had held possession was slain near Pendell, and the tomb stone which had been placed over his remains was that which had been discovered by the stranger—one of his descendents—whose name was John Valiant.

This last representative of the ancient family was the only son of the Reverend Henry Valiant, a Protestant clergyman. The Valiants, though originally Roman Catholics, had become imbued with the prevailing ideas which followed the Reformation, and, guided by the example of kings, bishops, priests and men high in authority, had changed their faith. The Reverend Mr. Valiant having been eminently pious, was selected by one of the great missionary societies to carry the gospel message to the “perishing” natives of India; and John Valiant, then quite young, was taken from school in order to accompany his parents to Calcutta. The Reverend Mr. Valiant devoted his life to the missionary work, and though he labored assiduously in connection with such men as Carey, and Ward, and Duff, and Martin, yet near the close of his life, which was prematurely ended in India, he regretted to be obliged to acknowledge that the common or lowest caste natives of that country—whom he had found by no comparison to be as destitute and as grossly ignorant as the same class of persons in Britain—were too much influenced by the superstitions of Hindooism to adopt Christianity. Nay, he had also found many of the learned Brahmins bold enough to assert that they could fairly prove, that the religious traditions of Persia, of Egypt, of Judea, of Greece, and of Rome, had had their origin in India, and that the doctrine of the Bible itself had been drawn from the great fountain of all religions, the sacred Vedas of the Hindoos; and he was also aware that the powerful arguments of an able Brahmin had succeeded in persuading even one of the Christian Missionaries to

change his faith.* After his father's death, young John Valiant was soon called upon to mourn the loss of his mother. Though now left without a single relative in India, he had, however, many warm friends, and guided by them he remained to pursue his studies in one of the principal institutions in the country. While here he became intimately acquainted with many of the sons of wealthy natives, who were receiving a liberal education, and he was surprised to find that though these young men were under the tuition of Christian professors, and had had many opportunities of hearing the strongest arguments which could be adduced in favor of the Christian religion, yet not one of these persons to his knowledge had ever changed his faith, or accepted the doctrines of the Bible.† Being a close applicant, in course of time he acquired a knowledge of Sanscrit, and could converse in Hindostanee and other native tongues, and he not only became well versed in the sacred literature of the Hindoos, but had on many occasions heard expositions of the Vedas by learned Brahmins. He was familiar with natives of every caste, and was so liberal in his opinions, and generous in his impulses, that his enlarged views and benevolent disposition made him a general favorite.

Upon leaving college, he secured an engagement in a wealthy mercantile house, and through the influence of friends, as well as by his excellent business habits, he rose by degrees to a high position, and traveled as a superin-

* Missionary Roberts by Rammohun Roy.

† The Reverend Dr. Prime, alluding to the great Christian colleges established by Dr. Duff and others in Calcutta, and which "numbered nearly fourteen hundred pupils," admits that "these institutions are open to students of all religions, and the mass of them are Hindoos or Mohammedans. Only in rare instances have they renounced the faith of their fathers, while fewer still have become real Christians.

It is not the desire to become acquainted with Christian truth, much less to become Christians, that induces so many youth to crowd these foreign seminaries of learning. They are anxious to become qualified to fill the various lucrative posts which, in connection with the commerce and business of the country, are open to the natives."—*Around the World*. p. 215. N. York, 1872.

tendent through many parts of India. His knowledge of the country was extensive, and during the terrible Sepoy rebellion, he proved to be of great service not only to the government, but to many of the natives by his interference in their behalf. He was also at Cawnpore during that fearful massacre at that place, and while there, though he was himself in imminent danger, yet he succeeded in saving the life of one distinguished English lady, and the life of the daughter of a wealthy Parsee merchant of Bombay. After the close of the rebellion he went to reside in that city, and married the Parsee lady whom he had saved, though she risked the loss of caste in marrying a stranger. He lived a happy life with her for about ten years, when she died, leaving him one son. John Valiant was at the time almost inconsolable; but though this affliction was terrible yet his trouble did not end here. He had sent his son, then almost eight years old, on a visit to some of his mother's relatives nearly one hundred miles from Bombay, and in about a month from the time of his wife's death, the news reached him that his boy had been seized by some wandering Thugs—whose religion teaches them that it is no crime to murder—and he was tortured by the most dreadful apprehensions. Every effort that man could make to recover this child had proved unavailing. Nearly a year had passed in the search, and the only consoling information he could obtain concerning him was that a child, answering the description of his son, had by some means got into the hands of a Presbyterian missionary who was returning to England, and that the boy had been taken to that country.

Under these severe afflictions John Valiant's health had become much impaired; and the general sympathy for him was very great. Though he had been for a long time in the hot climate of India, its influence at this juncture upon his constitution was rather severe, and his physician recommended a long sea voyage. Such a voyage he found in fact to be necessary, for the familiar scenes which reminded him of the happy days he had spent with his wife,

had a most depressing effect upon his spirits, and a change might be beneficial. Besides it was his duty not to rest until he had found some reliable tidings of his son; and he made up his mind that in case he should not succeed in his search, to spend his wealth, which was very great, in the purchase, if possible, of the old family estate in England, and to make that property available for the benefit of a class of overworked, distressed people in his native country, whom he believed to be far more destitute and degraded than any similar class met with in his travels through various parts of India.

In fact, the life of John Valiant had been spent so far in doing good to others; there was not the least degree of selfishness in his nature. Were he the father of half a dozen sons, he would not, for the sole purpose of enriching them, or to secure for them a life of sluggish ease—as wealthy ecclesiastics and many rich Christians are wont to do—forget his common relationship to mankind. From his heart he pitied the children of others, who were forced to face a life of poverty and hardship; and he did all he could to smooth their rugged way. His theory was, that poverty could not prevail to any great extent, were it not for the general grasping and cupidity of many of the great and the wealthy. He believed that monopoly of the land—the present old established system—was but robbery, and that any government which secured vast tracts of real estate, either by grant or by purchase, to one individual, did so at the expense of the natural rights of others. He was of the opinion that the earth was the common property of all, and that every person was entitled to that certain portion of land, sufficient to cultivate for his own sustenance, or for that of his family—and to that portion only; that by such a distribution of the land, and until a better system prevailed, all who were able and willing to work, would be comparatively independent and secure from poverty; the aged, the sickly, and the infirm, he claimed, should be supported by the State, as children would be supported by a kind parent. He also considered

that so-called existing rights, which interfered with the equitable apportionment of land, were but existing wrongs which legislation should abolish as speedily as possible. It was even his conviction that as nations found it necessary to secure a balance of power among rulers, and were unwilling to permit any one government to acquire too many possessions, or attain too extended an influence; so, in order to prevent mercantile monopoly, or social tyranny, individuals should be limited as to the amount of wealth they should be permitted to accumulate. He would often say, that were the claims of Justice but fully granted, the labor of Charity would be forever very light.

Though John Valiant had peculiar notions on the subject of religion, and though perfectly tolerant to all, he had given no aid toward the erection of churches or temples, or places of worship of any kind; yet he was a patron of schools, of colleges, of hospitals and of asylums. Charitable associations had been formed by him, and there was not a benevolent institution within his reach which had not been benefitted by his ready munificence. So highly was he esteemed, that in more than one of these places his portrait could be seen in the most conspicuous position—the readily recognized, well-built, middle-sized man; the brown hair; the high forehead; the blue eye, in which there was nothing stern; the large, well-shaped nose; the mouth, almost hidden in a profusion of soft beard, and the expression of the handsome face pleasing and benevolent. The portrait was not only respected by high caste natives, but revered by many an humble pariah.

It might be truly said, that there was a day of sorrow in Bombay when John Valiant was about to take his departure from that city. Representatives of all classes, Hindoos, Parsees, Mohammedans, Indo-Britons and others, the great and the humble, flocked to the spacious harbor to take leave of one who had worthily gained the name of being a public benefactor. Hundreds of the poorer people, whom he had served without distinction, lined the shore, and soon singled out the vessel in which

he had embarked. They watched the anchors as they were gradually drawn up, and the monotonous chorus of the sailors, as they turned the capstan, sounded to the listeners on shore like a wail on the waters. As the huge ship which was to bear away the common friend of all, swung slowly from her moorings, invocations were uttered by men of different creeds; and beseeching hands were raised to Brahma, to Zoroaster, to Mahomet, to Christna, and to Christ, that the beloved wanderer might be protected on the distant deep, and that no wild storm or disastrous hurricane might cross the fathomless leagues over which he had to be borne.

While a thousand eyes were gazing in one direction, the evening shadows seemed to steal down and rest upon the fluttering sails; the fading glory of the sunset appeared to sink into the heaving bosom of the wide sea; and as the vessel moved off on her lonely way, cheer after cheer was heard from shore and from ship. The deep boom of a farewell gun resounded along hill, and shore, and bay; and though sturdy men, who had cheered, could have wept, Hindoo mothers who could not cheer, were weeping; and little dark-eyed children of the East, who had neither wept nor cheered, were muttering the name of John Valiant, even in their mother's arms. Ere night had spread its gloom upon the scene, the dim uncovered form of one man could be seen at the stern of the ship, waving adieu, as it were, to the receding shore; and when darkness had at last closed around John Valiant, and had hidden him from the view of all, the most tender feelings of those of different nations and tribes—the genial impulse of our common humanity—were touched and awakened in many a heart, and many then wept in the shades of that dismal night, as if bewailing the loss of a true and only brother.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MISSIONARY AT WORK.

JOHAN VALIANT landed in Liverpool on his fortieth birthday. The long voyage from India had been very serviceable, and his health was much improved. Though still depressed in spirit, he felt that it was his duty to bear up under the most severe trials—as such trials were the common lot of all—and to be actively engaged in making his life useful to others. Being of a hopeful disposition, he yet trusted that the dark cloud which seemed to hang over his future would be removed, and that sunlight and brighter skies would cheer his after years. The agony of mind which he endured in consequence of the loss of his son, did not, however, lead him to despair of ever seeing him again; it was the uncertainty of the bleak period which might elapse before that son would be restored that made the present time so dreary.

After an absence of nearly twenty years he was again in his native land. His native land? How unmeaning was the flippant phrase! The land was now to him as a foreign shore—a land of strangers. Whom did he know among the thousands that he met every day in his wanderings? He might have felt less loneliness in a desert; not a familiar face to be seen among those he called his countrymen. He could not say that he had a relative in all England, unless his son might happily be living in the land. If he had ever heard of one from his parents, the long years which had passed since their death, and the

many strange events of his own life, had left his memory a complete blank as to any information he had ever received relating to family connections, except what he happened to know of the general family history. Neither had he any letters or documents from which he could glean the least information in that respect; for such as his father had left had been destroyed with many other records during the great mutiny in India. He had, however, several letters of introduction, he had ample resources, and he had determined that after a few days' rest in London, he would re-commence his search for his son, and ascertain all he could as to the chance of ever becoming possessed of the old family estate near Pendell.

First, then, in order to find out who or where the missionary was that was supposed to have taken a foreign child to England, he had made many enquiries, and was advised to call at some of the principal Mission Houses of London. He could not tell the exact time that the missionary had left Bombay, nor to what port in England he had been destined, but after having visited two or three of these different religious agencies, he ascertained that a Presbyterian minister had landed in Liverpool from Bombay about three months previous to the time of his own arrival, and that the minister had with him, besides his wife and a little Parsee girl, a Hindoo lady and a boy about eight or nine years of age, whom she claimed to be her nephew; and that these persons had been baptized and were reputed to be converts to Christianity. This preacher, he was informed, had left England and was then in Belfast, in the north of Ireland. Mr. Valiant then took the name and address of the minister, with the intention of going to Ireland as soon as circumstances would permit.

While making enquiries at the different Mission Houses, the agents finding that he had resided so long in India, and had such a knowledge of that far off land and its various inhabitants, seldom obtained by strangers, asked several questions as to the state of that country, the con-

dition of the natives socially and morally, and whether in his opinion the great superstition which overshadowed the minds of those remarkable people was soon likely to give way to the illuminating power of the pure gospel. He replied that as a general thing the people of India were quite indifferent to Christianity, looking upon it as a religion far inferior to their own; that every nation and tribe in that vast territory seemed to be devoted to its own form of superstition; and that among Brahmins, Buddhists, Mohammedans, and Parsees, with whom he had long dwelt in India and in other countries, and who comprise over two-thirds of the whole human race, he had found as much integrity and kindness of heart as he had ever found among Christians. His answers led them to wonder at the extent of his information; and when he informed them that there were thousands of poor wretches even in London who were much more ignorant, destitute and depraved than any of the Hindoos or Buddhists he ever met in his travels, they seemed willing to admit the fact, but rejoined that such natives of the East, though perhaps actually more comfortable as to worldly circumstances, were yet more destitute than the poorest, because in their natural state unbelievers were under condemnation, not having ever heard the glad tidings of salvation; and some High Churchmen had gone so far as to tell him that those squalid and impoverished natives of Britain to whom he had alluded, were really better off than Pagans possibly could be, inasmuch as most of the paupers of England had had at least the benefit of Christian baptism.

During his conversation with the missionary agents, he also learned that there were not only missions to Turkey, to India, to China, to Japan, to the Pacific islands, and to frozen regions in the north—missions to the heathen, but actually missions also to Christian nations. Protestants had sent missionaries to convert Roman Catholics, and Catholics had sent missionaries to convert Protestants. Besides this he well knew that there were what might be called minor, or sectarian missions. These are to some

extent sustained by restless preachers who are ever ready to travel about and engage in sharp discussions for the purpose of gaining adherents to their particular views. The Christianity of Europe is torn into shreds by sects. In England the Churchman repudiates the Dissenter, who is solemnly warned to return to the fold, out of which there is no safety. Then the Dissenters, while declaiming against Church pretensions, dispute among themselves. The Presbyterian denounces the Methodist, the Methodist the Baptist, and the Baptist takes a high stand against all others. Indeed he actually found more hostility towards one another among Protestant sects in England, than he had ever found among heathen sects in India; and he also had reason to fancy that many Protestant fanatics would prefer to proseletize a hostile sectarian than they would to convert a foreign unbeliever to Christianity. On the whole he was satisfied that the money annually spent in the mission service—the large sum required to send out missionaries and their families, to pay agents, clerks, printers, and others connected with such establishments—was in the aggregate an amount sufficient to endow a vast charitable institution; and that the results so far, for all this outlay, particularly in India, were but very meagre. Missionaries had from time to time complained of their want of success, and had perhaps attributed their slow progress to any thing but the proper cause; and he gave it as his opinion that if the large expenditure, which he considered only wasted in India, were but properly expended at home, for the benefit of the British paupers, there would be fewer harrowing events to be recorded of the ignorance, distress, and social misery prevailing in Great Britain, that reputed land of piety and wealth.*

During his stay in London, John Valiant being desirous of obtaining information about Pendell and its neighborhood, was recommended to call on the Rev. George Morton, rector of Pendell, who at that time was living in his

* See Note 4.

city residence. He found the rector's dwelling to be one of the most stylish, and located in a quarter noted for its aristocratic pretensions; and the rector himself, as a humble servant of the Church, seemed to be in the enjoyment of the greatest abundance of worldly comforts. No doubt, the Reverend Rector, like others of his class, cheerfully performed much religious drudgery among the poorest of his people in more than one parish, and in his ample distribution of spiritual food to others, his own ghostly pabulum might at times have become a little deficient, and his pious hopes rather saddened, particularly when he mourned over the grievous secular destitution existing among those very people to whom he had ministered. Next to fervent prayer, the Rector might have therefore found the comfort and relaxation of a dip into fashionable life—by way of contrast—just the very thing to stimulate him to further exertions among the poor of the Lord, as well as among sinners in the sanctuary.

Not being able to obtain from Mr. Morton the information he required, the Reverend gentleman gave him a letter of introduction to his Curate at Pendell; and in a few days afterward he presented himself at the rural parsonage. He found the Rev. Mr. Meade the very person he wished to find—like a father, like an old friend—altogether most courteous and agreeable. He was delighted with the scenery of the valley, and had a dream-like recollection of the place; for his father, previous to his departure for India, had taken him on a holiday visit to see the ancient Manor House, on the old estate. What a difference he found between the modest parsonage of the poor curate—the man who worked—and the stylish city residence of the wealthy rector, who perhaps only prayed! Yet there was something so quietly beautiful in the surroundings of the unpretending house of Mr. Meade, with its white walls, its patch of dark green ivy, its quaint windows, with small diamond-shaped panes, its shading vines, and its climbing, clustering roses round the doorway, and then there was the pleasant lawn, dotted with

trees, sloping down to meet the boulders, the gravel, the shells, and the ripples on the beach, that he would have readily chosen it as a model for his own dwelling-place.

As Miss Meade was absent from home—she had at last been prevailed on to visit the Rector's wife—and as Mr. Meade could not, on that account, well offer his hospitality, he accepted Mr. Valiant's invitation to dinner at the inn. While there, Mr. Meade gave his new friend a long account of the changes that had taken place at Pendell; he told him about the poor of the parish, the low condition of the wild people of the Heath, and gave him some important information as to the legal position of the old family estate, which he told him had been advertised for some time, by a final order in Chancery, and was to be sold in less than a week. This was indeed information of the most important kind to him; and, as there was little time for delay, John Valiant started that evening for London. The sale took place as was advertised, the land was sold at a low price, and he went back to Pendell within five days from that time the purchaser and sole proprietor of over a thousand acres of the Manor, called Mayston.

Upon his return from the city, he soon became acquainted with nearly all in the neighborhood of Pendell; he knew many also in the adjoining parish of Betnall. There was nothing like pretension in his manner, and many wondered that a person like him, the wealthy owner of a large property, could be so easily approached, and so familiar with poor working men, and even with children. He had already placed in the Curate's hands an ample sum to distribute among the deserving poor. He went to visit old Sarah Afton, and spent an hour in her cottage; and Sarah, as well as others, was loud in his praise. He sought out old Stephen Gray, and went with him to the cemetery—as Bob Cuffer had stated—to find an old family tomb. Next to Mr. Meade, he made a companion of old Stephen, he was fond of listening to his simple recitals; and as soon as he had decided to visit the people of the Heath, he took him along as his only protector, rightly

judging, that with such a person, he could win more confidence than he should were he accompanied by a score of constables, or surrounded by a company of grenadiers.

When the wounded men had left the ring, and when the excitement attendant on the occasion had in some measure subsided, John Valiant stood quietly among the people—the central object—as if scanning the faces of those around him. Not a word was spoken, and as his eyes wandered from one to another, he appeared to be in deep thought, as if anxious to read their very hearts. The calm, resolute bearing of the stranger seemed to win not only admiration, but something also akin to submission. The crowd gradually increased. One by one came to look at the man who had, perhaps, just saved a life—saved a man from being publicly slaughtered—and who had bound up the bruises and wounds of the unfortunate wretches; the man who, besides this, had the daring to utter a reproof to all. Yet nearly all who had heard that reproof, had now a kind of vague idea that it was deserved; and they felt that in the words which had been uttered, there was not one of anger. On the people came, young and old, from different parts of the Heath; even many of the Gypsies, impelled by a natural curiosity, hurried from their distant camps, and stood around the ring. In a short time, John Valiant moved toward the carriage, the people made way for him, and when he entered the vehicle, he stood alongside old Stephen, and appeared in full view before them all. The carriage was now quickly surrounded, eager faces were turned upward, and every one present seemed to expect that the stranger would say something before his departure. While all were thus waiting, his clear voice was now heard uttering this kind address:

“My friends, you have, no doubt, been surprised at my visit. I have but lately come from a far country, and, though a stranger, I was anxious to be among you, and to learn for myself, whether the reports which I have heard about you were correct, and whether the people of this

wide plain, are as wild, as wicked, and as ferocious as has been represented. I was cautioned not to come her because it was said that as you cared but little for human life, that as you could not be grateful for kindness, my own life was in danger. But you see I came to this place without fear, this old man being my only protector. I came to find your condition most deplorable, and to find that you have not only been badly treated by your fellow-men, but urged on to infamy. I came, and have witnessed your poverty, your wickedness, and your barbarous pastime; and, after all, though I have given you a plain reproof, yet you have not so far injured me; and I am now satisfied that, bad as you have been represented, that bad as you really are, your hearts still contain germs of goodness; that you can be grateful to those who are kind to you; and that you can be raised from your present low state, to become in time as honest, as diligent, and as much respected as others."

Here the feelings of the people being evidently touched, as if the first blessed ray of hope had just dawned on their minds. All present gave a long, loud cheer, and he then continued:

"Now, my friends, as I pity you all, my object from this day forward, if you are willing to help me, will be to try and improve your condition. I stand here as the owner of this land; I am the sole owner of this old estate; I own the Manor House, and the entire Manor of Mayston. This land once belonged to my forefathers; it has now come into my possession, and as it is more than I ever want to use, I wish to make it serviceable to others. I do not want to drive you away from this Heath; I want you to remain. I want to keep you all with me, if you are willing to stay. I desire to see this wild, barren plain improved, and made green and inviting. I wish to secure to each of you who is willing to cultivate it, a piece of land; I want to see each of you have his own cottage, and his own pleasant garden; I want to have a schoolhouse erected, and to find your children—and even yourselves—

learn useful knowledge; and I want to see you all lead peaceable, sober, industrious lives. I have had my own afflictions; it will lighten them to be engaged with you in this approach to civilization. Will you, then, friends, help me to bring about this change?" Cries of "we will, we will!" "I want to improve the whole estate; you shall have an interest in that improvement, and every day you truly serve, shall bring its true reward; and lastly, I want to see you and your children go out into the parishes, and to any other place in the whole kingdom, without being watched, without being dreaded, and without being despised. Now, my friends, I ask once more, shall we work together for this great end?" Cries of, "Yes, yes, yes!" "Well, then, be it so. I, John Valiant, am willing to take you all on trust; remember that, and remember the name. I must now leave here to visit the old mansion, which I have not seen since I was a boy, and I shall soon return to begin the good work."

The rough set, unaccustomed to pity or kindness from a stranger, now saw both pity and kindness in the stranger's eye, and wonderful to tell. many of the women—women who are ever the first capable of detecting those blessed impulses of the swelling heart—saw those genuine rays of pity shining on the stranger's face, and soon those very rays were reflected in the unbidden tears which filled their eyes. Other women present, burying their faces in their aprons, sat and sobbed like little children; even the stalwart heroine who would have struck down this benefactor, now hung her head in his presence like one condemned. Men stood here and there as if overcome by a singular influence. Some quite listless, others with trembling nerves and clenched hands—hands not clenched in anger, but as if trying to resist some mysterious power which was about to assert itself in unmanning them, and casting the very evil out of their natures.

Before he went away, John Valiant walked about the place to see how the people worked and lived. He went into two or three of the meanest huts; he entered the

shed, and he was shocked to see the condition of the poor overworked children, and he would not leave the place until he had obtained a promise that the sickly children should be carefully attended, and that none of the others should be asked to work until his return to the Heath. He distributed small sums among all those who appeared to be in need. Every woman received something, and every child had a little gift. To Harry Tamblin he gave an amount sufficient to procure decent interment for the dead girl, and necessaries for the wounded men. Just as he was about to drive away, weeping women caught his hands and kissed them; and the eyes of many hardened men seemed to be moistened for the first time; and then as the carriage moved off a loud cheer was heard all over the plain.

For a few moments the people stood and looked wistfully after the vehicle, but before it was a hundred yards in advance, most of those present, as if by an involuntary movement, rushed after the carriage and followed like the escort of some distinguished personage.

After they had got beyond the limits of the Heath, many of those who resided in the parishes wondered to see such a procession; and many even dreaded a wholesale plundering incursion of their lawless neighbors. It was, however, soon evident that nothing of the kind was intended; there was not the slightest approach to anything disorderly; those whom they had feared went along in a quiet and submissive manner, and whether the carriage went slowly, or at a brisk rate, all kept together. As they emerged from a long avenue of huge oaks, the ancient Manor House, situated on an eminence, burst into full view. There the procession halted for a few moments to gaze on the scene. A slight shower had fallen a short time previously, and now a rainbow arched the eastern sky, leaving the Manor House and its surroundings a central picture in the iridescent frame, while slanting sunbeams shone through the vacant apertures which once held windows, and a thousand rays of the evening sun sparkled in

the rain drops which stood like gems on the dark ivy that draped the mouldering walls.

At this moment a number of gypsies who were ranged on each side of the passage leading to the great entrance of the building sung out aloud :

Oh welcome back to the ancient Hall!
The chief returns to its ivied wall,
Sure sign that the Manor now shall be
A place for the noble and the free,
The home of the Valiant family;
Birds sing aloud, flowers ever remain,
For the heir of Mayston comes again.

John Valiant left the carriage and approached the building alone. He stood uncovered on the threshold of the doorless entrance. Tears filled his eyes as he thought of the past, and he was almost overcome by his emotions. Ere he moved from the spot, those behind him were startled by what appeared to be an apparition. The old gypsy woman, Zingari, wearing a red cloak, and holding a kind of wand, stepped slowly out from an interior recess, and stood before him. A little gypsy boy that she held by the hand, had a chaplet of oak leaves which she took from him. She muttered an invocation in a foreign tongue, which John Valiant appeared to understand, and then as he bent his head, she placed the chaplet upon it; and thus arrayed, at the sunset hour, the heir of Mayston entered the home of his ancestors.

CHAPTER XIII.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSORS.

THE Reverend Mr. Rockett, rector of Betnall, unlike his spiritual brother, Morton, of the adjoining parish of Pendell, did not care for city life, but chose to reside in one of his country parishes where he could enjoy things in his own way. Being a fortunate man as well as a good churchman, he not only had the spiritual income of three other livings—places which he scarcely ever visited—but he was successful in securing curates to suit his own views, men who were willing to pray at a cheap rate, and to preach against dissent. Parson Rockett, though not troubled with profound ideas on theology or politics, or in fact on any other subject, had one particular idea, which though not original he himself considered important, and worthy of grave consideration, and this was, that whatever national misfortune had occurred in England since the Reformation must all be imputed to the spirit of dissent; no matter whether such misfortune came in the shape of war or riots, short crops or scarlet fever. The National Church he looked upon as worthy of the greatest reverence, as capable of being the salvation practically as well as spiritually of the entire kingdom; and he often wondered how it was possible for peasant, prince or potentate, to overlook its perfection, or to deny its paramount claims. The Pope he rather pitied, as being somewhat spiritually deluded; but the whole vile tribe of dissenters he held in the most utter contempt; and he

would frequently assert there was not a prison, workhouse, or madhouse, in all England, but what should be filled with the stupid, ignorant drivellers of hypocritical Methodists, sour-visaged Presbyterians, and sloppy Baptists. The ragged, ranting, reverend itinerants of these and other sects, he would expose to labor on the public highways; he would subject them to the most degrading servitude, or he would transport the whole contemptible crew during life to some distant penal colony. He once tried to argue with a Methodist clown, but having failed to convince, he took off his coat and fought with the "*Swaddler*" outside the church door on a Sunday, in the presence of some of his own congregation.* Statesmen like Gladstone or Bright who had dared to advise the dis-establishment of the Church, or who had ventured to tamper in the least degree with its temporalities, he would hang at once to the highest tree; and were he to have his own way, no man in Great Britain or Ireland, should enter a university, or be a legislator, lawyer, physician or teacher; or hold any office high or low unless he was willing to subscribe to the *Thirty-nine Articles*, and to solemnly swear that the same were the very essence of truth. Subscribe to these same articles, and no matter what little peccadilloes one might commit, no matter what natural frailties men or monarchs—monarchs were always more than men in his estimation—were subject to these thirty-nine church plasters applied according to rule, would heal every moral defect; these thirty-nine steps in the theological ladder would enable him who climbed on them to reach the very confines of Paradise.

There is no record among the latest accepted scriptural revisions to prove that St. Paul ever kept for the amusement of himself, or for any of his friends, either game cocks, fox hounds. or race horses, or that he ever drank costly wines, or generally lived "fast." It is however to be inferred from what he is said to have written, that at one time he took pleasure in fighting with beasts at Ephe-

* See Note 5.

sus; and he admits that he had derived a kind of grim enjoyment while going about making havoc of the church, entering into every house, harrassing and hunting certain obstinate men and women who had presumed to differ from him on some religious matters; and so anxious was he that all should think just as he thought on such subjects, that he stood by and permitted a man named Stephen, who had held heterodox opinions, to be stoned to death, rather than allow unlicensed free thought to contaminate the simple faith of others. But it is believed that after Paul had entered the ministry, he put away these childish ideas, and grew more moderate; and though he still thought that his own opinions were those that ought to prevail—for he was a true priest in this respect—he ceased to be an open active persecutor, and attended more particularly to the production of explanatory letters or epistles, which he must have thought greatly needed, as very few of the wealthy and respectable pew holders of his time were capable of understanding the complex doctrines of the new faith, until his inspired sentiments were added to what had already been written. Upon reflection many now consider—even many of the elect—that if Paul had a failing, were it possible for him to have had one, it was that after he had become an apostle, much of his old persecuting spirit had remained, much of the Mosaic animus which had governed his utterances in the synagogue governed his announcements in the church. He had been intolerant as a Jew; can it be said that he was not so as a Christian? Some have also thought that St. Paul is the reputed author of more than half of the present reduced number of books comprising the New Testament, he had another failing—that of being considered a chief scribe. Any way, whether he can be justly charged with these defects or not, it is remarkable that, since his time, the most learned priests and prelates of the Church have exhibited in their own lives these two particular idiosyncrasies, intolerance in disposition, and an itch for writing, as if it were actually necessary to have Paul's failings,

as well as Paul's virtues, in order to prove beyond all manner of doubt the genuineness of that apostolic succession upon which they base their clerical authority and assumption.

The arrogance of the priests of almost every form of religion seems to be inherent; and the terrible facts of history can alone tell of their persecuting spirit. That spirit, it must be admitted, has actuated in turn every Christian sect, great or insignificant. The most enlightened heathens and unbelievers charge Christianity with being essentially intolerant; and they assert that every persecutor for opinion's sake, from the early days of the Church, to the present time, claims as his authority for that most damning of all sins, the very words of Paul himself: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, *let him be accursed.*" And then they point out how Paul is fully sustained by John, who wrote; "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is a partaker of his evil deeds." With regard to these threats from Paul and John, and to another text, which says: "He that believeth not shall be damned," the enemies of Christianity boldly assert, that nowhere in the Vedas of India—the most ancient of all sacred books—nowhere in the theological literature of heathen nations; nowhere among the doctrines of ancient pagan philosophers, can sentiments so utterly bigoted and adverse to freedom of thought be found; and these opponents also assert that the aphorism, "believe or be damned," can apply alone to the claims assumed for the faith of the great Apostle.

Not satisfied with the Scriptures themselves, ordained teachers seem to think it their duty to follow the example of Paul, and become scribes. If sectarian priests cannot manage to change the actual words of what has already been written, they endeavor to distort the meaning, to suit their own narrow views; and to this intent commen-

tary after commentary is published. The number of expository volumes that have been showered on bewildered believers since the days of the Apostles, is overwhelming; and contending scribes are still at work, their excited efforts too often producing wild confusion, or the open hostility of an intelligent class to all Scriptural inspiration.

The Rector of Betnall, though rather intolerant in disposition, had not, however, the other apostolic voucher—he was not a scribe. He had never written a commentary, nor had he even attempted the most feeble annotation on a disputed passage. He had often told friends, who had complained of his slackness, that he did not think he had ever written over a score of letters in all his life; and no one would, therefore, imagine that he could spend a week, or even a day, in the composition of a sermon, when he could order and obtain a ready supply of the orthodox stamp to his taste, for less than half a crown apiece, or about a guinea for a baker's dozen—even sometimes for half that price. No, indeed, Parson Rockett never bothered himself with divinity to that extent; he considered that he did well if he read, perhaps, once a month, a vapid eulogy of the Church to the few that might be in attendance; and as long as his curates saw to the collection of church rates, and succeeded in preventing any of the flock from wandering toward dissent, the good man's conscience was easy, and he spent the other Sundays in innocent recreation with a few of his particular friends.

It will, no doubt, be admitted that some ministers, though fortunate in having a sacred call, may nevertheless become frivolous and degenerate, and after all, subject to particular human frailties. It has been said, and perhaps with some degree of truth, that filthy lucre, or a love of money, has even exceeded the sensuality which has been charged against the clergy. Popes, Cardinals, Bishops and Priests, distinguished clerical rulers of all sects, in times past, as well as at present, have not only

been eager for power and authority, but greedy for the means of obtaining it; and the wealth secured—often by reprehensible devices—for churches, religious societies, and pious corporations, is in startling contrast with the stinted funds available for the support of schools, asylums, hospitals and other charitable institutions. Dissent now stalks abroad in fashionable costume. Even the once world despising Methodist has flung aside his low-crowned hat, and his high-collared coat to dress *a la mode*. This once wild piety is now curbed under the shadow of a steeple, and its preacher—now a Rev. Doctor—shouts no frantic prayer, but utters his classic invocation in a “metropolitan church.”

Parson Rockett, a tall, stout, well-fed looking person, being a rector, was of course wealthy; and like a sensible divine, he was determined to enjoy his hard-earned money. Few, indeed, can extract more sweets from human life than a popular priest. The rector was a magistrate, and exercised his authority with as little compunction over a Methodist or a Baptist, as he did upon a poacher or a pauper. He had a large, comfortable house, well, if not elegantly furnished. His cellar was stored with the choicest wines, and the strongest liquors, which his temperance principles did not altogether forbid him touching. He did not believe in temperance bosh. Did not Paul say to Timothy: “Drink no longer water, but drink a little wine.”* He had servants and hand maidens—to some of

* The temperance principles of one of the Bishops of the State Church may be known from the following remarks of a newspaper published in December, 1873:

“The Bishop of Lincoln, England, has actually preached a sermon in his cathedral against the temperance pledge. He denounced it as unscriptural. He said that it ‘undermined the Godhead of Christ’—which, at least, is rather a curious figure. ‘Then suppose,’ said the Bishop, ‘that Timothy had been a pledged man when advised by St. Paul to use a little wine for his stomach’s sake—would he not have injured his health and inflicted a damage on the cause of truth by refusing to follow the Apostolic advice?’ Moreover, according to the Bishop, the pledge ‘leads to lying,’ and ‘it is a deadly sin for Christians to sign it.’ The Bishop’s sermon, naturally enough, was quoted with the warmest approbation at the licensed victualer’s dinner in the Crystal Palace.”

the latter, it had been rumored, he was much attached ; he had horses and hounds which had been trained to take a short cut after a fox across the fields or through the crops of a dissenter, in preference to a dash through those of a sound Churchman ; he had pigeons and poultry which he fattened experimentally ; capons and cauliflowers, which he devoured rather voraciously ; and when he felt wearied in the study of whist or of Whateley, he found ready recuperation in a cock fight. This was, perhaps, one of his greatest enjoyments, and what he called “ glorious fun ;” and there was not a rector within fifty miles who could exhibit more magnificent game cocks, or bet with more successful results upon his feathered favorites. As the Parson was bound to be famous, at least in this way, he spared neither pains nor hard cash to get the best birds ; and those of his rustic parishioners, who were ready to boast of his enterprise in this respect, would assert that he spent “ more’n a hoondred poonds a year ”—much more than the salary he paid any of his curates—“ t’ gat th’ best gam bloode that th’ coontry could affoord.”

This boast was by no means an exaggeration, for the parson’s mania in this direction was well known to his journeymen preachers, every one of whom was authorized to secure, by purchase, or otherwise, the best game cocks to be found in their respective parishes. So delighted was the Rev. J. Rockett, with the diversion which a cock fight afforded, that often, even privately, on Sunday itself, when his curates were authoritatively dispensing the word, and perhaps when the British savages on the Heath might be mauling one another, the parson and a few favored friends could be found in the large enclosed yard at the back of his stables—a yard with great, high walls—watching with delight the desperate struggles between two birds, and staking heavy sums on the result.

The Rector of Betnall was well known to have one apostolic qualification, if even his defamers would admit of no other—he was given to hospitality. As his table was always well supplied, he liked to receive stylish stran-

gers and fashionable sinners. No doubt, by such a course he perhaps thought he might entertain "angels unawares;" but as these are admitted by proper judges to be of different races, it might be difficult to designate the special region to which the rector's angels sometimes properly belonged. However, on a particular day, we find him showing courtesy to a number of peculiar guests—a few of the very elect, the ordained of his own church, with a bishop at their head. These might be truly set down as saints and ministers of grace, and the Christian ladies who flocked about them were no doubt angels—and bright ones, too, as the great majority of ladies of course always are; and never since the happy day that the parson conscientiously took and subscribed his clerical vows, had he reason to feel more elated.

The occasion which had called forth the special hospitality, was the triennial visit of the Lord Bishop of Storkchester. Great exertions had been made to get a large number of ignorant heretics prepared for confirmation; and special efforts had been put forth to get up a dinner fit for the Episcopal stomach, for his lordship's chaplains, and for the clergy and distinguished company that were in attendance. All Betnall had, of course, turned out to see the Episcopal carriage, the retinue, and the saintly person himself. Early in the forenoon a splendid coach, drawn by four glossy bays, drew up before the Rectory. How the country folks stared at the gold-mounted harness, and at the postillion, the coachman, and the footman, in blue and scarlet velvet liveries! The bishop—a rubicund little man, well preserved, was glad to see the rector—his reverend brother in the Lord. They had known each other in earlier days, and both bishop and rector knew something also of the particular thorn that had once troubled the flesh of the other before ordination had in a manner subdued old propensities and put Satan to his wit's end. His lordship and the rector had also, like many others, obtained preferment in the Church more through the influence of certain distinguished no-

blemen than in consequence of theological profundity or of marked clerical devotion.

As soon as the bishop had entered the house, and got fairly out of sight of the gaping crowd, he gave a knowing wink at the rector, entered a private room, and when they were closeted together, his lordship hurriedly swallowed a glass of wine, and then laughing aloud, pulled a small note from his pocket:

"Ah, Jack, Jack, what an epistle to send to your bishop! Pon my soul and honor, if I were to publish it in the *Record*, the Archbishop would, no doubt, laugh himself into fits, and the whole race of dissenters from Dan to Beer-sheba, would, of course, rejoice and be exceedingly glad at the expose. O, Jack! what an apostle you are, to be sure. What a *custos morum* among the clergy!"

"Why, Tom—I beg your lordship's pardon for the familiarity—but let me see it, can't you? Tom, what the dev—I beg your pardon again—but what is it, what is it?"

"Ah! you holy rogue, that apostolic hands were ever laid upon your noble skull!—read that, Jack, read that."

The bishop handed the rector the few lines he had received a day or two previously by post from Betnall. It seems that the rector had written a short note to the bishop, informing him that everything was ready for the practical reception; he had also, at the same time, written a note to one of his curates. Both of these billets lay on his desk, and, in his usual hurry, the note intended for the curate had been directed to the bishop, and it read as follows:

"DEAR FOLSON: You must get that cock by hook or by crook. Give old Marshall his price, if you can do no better. I'll have it out of him in some other way. One of those infernal scoundrels from the Heath stole the splendid bird that Hovey sent me, and I must have another as good. The bishop will be here by Tuesday; send as many for confirmation as you can. Should any of the old ones forget whether they had ever received the rite, no matter, let them come on—we want a good turn out—a second operation will do them no harm. Nail the cock without fail. Yours, JOHN ROCKETT.

The parson felt a little chagrined at his mistake, but his

lordship, who was in the best of humor, did not keep him a moment in suspense; he drank off another glass of the excellent sherry, and clapping the rector familiarly on the shoulder, said:

"Now, Jack, no nonsense between us. On my word, if I had a good chance, I'd really like to see some of this rare sport again—quite harmless in its way. You've got the birds, I suppose. Can't you let even Vanscourt have a look at them before service; can't you, Jack? He'd be highly pleased."

There was no mistake as to the bishop's eagerness for innocent sport, if a suitable chance offered, but his lordship desired to be circumspect; his chaplain, Mr. Vanscourt, might go, but he himself could not.

The rector quickly turned round, delighted at the hint, and in high glee replied:

"O, Tom, you're not a bit changed—not a bit—the same good fellow as ever."

This hasty and rather familiar address incautiously blurted out, again bothered the rector; but the bishop did not seem to notice it. His lordship, though anxious to see the birds, and perhaps willing to have them tested in the pit, was yet reluctant to appear as a patron of such sport, particularly when he perhaps might be observed by some censorious Dissenter who would only be too ready to cast a slur on the Church. No, he would merely take a look at the game birds, and should they happen to fight, he must retire. The rector in his eager desire to amuse the bishop, really paid but little heed to his lordship's objections—it was but innocent pastime; he went at once to get things ready, and while Mr. Vanscourt, the bishop's chaplain, and two or three other divines happened, as it were, to stroll out into the yard where the cocks were being spurred for the occasion, the bishop and one or two of his clerical friends remained in the house, and watched the proceedings from a window.

The fight soon commenced; the birds were well matched and the contest was likely to be close. The Bishop like

others got somewhat excited; neither his religion nor his elevation to Episcopal dignity, had as yet altogether "whipped the offending Adam out of him," and he looked on from the window, greatly interested. His chaplain ventured a little bet with one of the clergymen on a particular bird; the bet was of course taken, and the rector even offered to back the chaplain's wager and give heavy odds. Other persons staked sums on the result, and by and by a few more of the clerical gentlemen who had remained in the house, having an inkling of what was going on in the back yard, stole quietly out to the arena; hostlers and men servants followed, and in spite of every precaution little ragged boys and laborers climbed high enough on some of the poplar trees that stood in a row outside the wall, to look down into the yard and see what was going on; it was to them as well as to many of the clergy a great attraction.

By this time the chaplain had become so animated that he seemed to have forgotten his clerical character. He was seen standing close to the springing, fluttering birds, giving an exclamation of delight as his favorite made a successful dash; now again, with hands on knees, he would stoop over intent on watching the battle. In the temporary confusion that took place his clerical hat—of peculiar shape—had been somehow knocked aside jauntily on his head; his spectacles hung awry across his nose, he had become, as it were, disarranged; and altogether the *tout ensemble* of his reverence was not then such as was strictly becoming the conventional gravity of a prelatical chaplain. Parson Rockett fussed about bareheaded, so absorbed with the struggle that he apparently forgot the presence of the bishop and the clergy. The other reverend gentlemen, with one or two exceptions, seemed to be greatly pleased with the sport, probably because the bishop appeared to be so delighted with it; and almost all in the yard were evidently so interested in the fight between two game cocks, that the occasion which had brought most of them together at Betnall had been nearly forgotten.

All this time there were people waiting in the crowded church who no doubt were under the impression that the delay in the commencement of the service was caused by his lordship's attendance to his private devotions, preparatory to the administration of the solemn rite which was that day to confirm so many in the faith.

If, however, his lordship of Storkchester and certain of his clergy derived any enjoyment from witnessing a forced fight between the wretched birds, those persons who had the good fortune to be in the church had ample compensation for having been kept waiting. Miss Esther Meade had promised to come from Pendell to preside at the organ, and never did the old walls of Betnall parish church resound to richer strains. There she sat like a divinity surrounded by silent worshipers, and every soft note that she brought forth seemed to be wafted away at once on a mission to the pearly gates. Was she, in the absence of the ordained, making supplication like a ministering angel for the people? If so, the strains in which she prayed made every ear attentive, every eye dim, and every heart swell with emotion. Her sermon was tenderly awakening, her precepts were gentle, and her petition was for peace. There she was proving her apostolic power before all, and working miracles for unbelievers, infusing life into dead souls, and melting sordid, icy hearts by her grand skill in the sublime mystery of music. What ordination could bestow such gifts? and what virtue could emanate from tawdry mitres or crosiers, from formal rituals, or ecclesiastical display, equal to that which she drew forth from the chastity of soft, sweet sounds?

There was a hush in the church when she raised her fingers from her last prayer; and then silence was the worship offered to the Great Supreme. But soon a hundred eyes were lifted to where she sat; one person, more than all others, seemed to be lost in admiration; this was the Rev. Mr. Morton, rector of Pendell; he was still most attentive to Miss Meade, and would not lose sight of her for the society of a bishop. He stood robed inside the

altar railing, and intently gazing on the fair preacher in the organ gallery. The Rev. Mr. Meade, his curate, similarly attired, sat submissively behind him, speculating upon the nature of spiritual gifts, and doubting whether the most pretentious priest could excel his daughter's simple power over human hearts. A great number of smartly dressed young people awaiting confirmation seemed to have grown devoutly thoughtful for the first time; and a venerable couple who were seated in a retired corner looked as if desirous of leaving "this vale of tears" for the heaven that was then present to their imagination. It was old Stephen Gray and Sarah Afton who sat side by side. Old Sarah with pensive aspect was perhaps thinking of the dreary past, while Stephen, with suffused eyes, seemed full of hope. He looked tenderly at her who was near him, and then gratefully up at his other angel, Esther Meade, and then he wondered in his simplicity how *she* came to be able to make people weep; he wondered where music had its birth; and then again he wondered whether when the troubles of this life were all over, Sarah and he should be welcomed by strains so heavenly when they greeted each other on their happy arrival in the beautiful land of the blest.

CHAPTER XIV.

CLERICAL THAUMATURGY.

THOSE experienced in religious matters assert that the change from nature to grace is one of the most remarkable. Old things are said to have passed away, and all things to have become new. That is to say, the gross desires which a man is said to have as a worldling are relinquished for the more elevated and spiritual enjoyments which a lively faith is presumed to bestow. It would be auspicious indeed were this change as lasting as it is pronounced to be beneficial; but unhappily it is too evanescent. Men in all ages have become religious enthusiasts for a time, and persons of all creeds who have become disgusted with the things of time and sense—disappointed with expectation—have generally, after longer or shorter periods of religious devotion, returned to the world and to its so-called pomps and vanities, to its pleasures or its engrossing cares.

Strange as it may seem no class of men have been more frail, and more erring in religious consistency, than priests themselves. Though they undoubtedly regard heaven as the realization of their fondest hopes, yet the honors and emoluments of earth have been sufficiently attractive to eclipse, even for a time, the glories of the celestial home; leaving them like ordinary beings, to wander wistfully through the fading beauty and splendor of this sinful planet; and while preaching to others they themselves may too often become as castaways.

Among the Brahmins, where are said to be found the most ancient of all clergy, a man is born to the priestly order, and is consecrated, as it were, sacred by inheritance, and the Jews, like other nations, copying from India and from Egypt, had their Aaronic priesthood. Among Christians, however, there is no such royal road to the favored position, and one must prepare for the pulpit as he would prepare, in many respects, for any other profession; but somehow candidates for the altar are always ready to give a guarantee for the sincerity of their intentions by asserting that they have an irresistible desire to enter the ministry—not of course for pecuniary gain—but to sound the glad tidings; and to establish the purity of their motives in the eyes of the world, they are prepared to solemnly swear or declare before ordination, that they are called by the Holy Spirit to go like apostles into the highways and byways to preach the gospel to perishing sinners, and to try and induce men every where to repent and to be born again.

This idea of a “regeneration”—a peculiar scriptural term—had its origin in the metempsychosis of Paganism, and as the Hindoo doctrine of the transmigration of souls is, perhaps, among the most ancient of all religious conceptions, this idea has been adopted by the writers of the gospels, in order to illustrate the apostolic meaning of the new birth from original sin to righteousness; and every Christian preacher, from the lordly Archbishop down to the most insignificant dissenter, is presumed to be a “new creature,” is expected to have been “born again,” and to be in actual possession of this great credential before he undertakes to venture out into the dark places of the earth to add “seals to his ministry.”

Well, if we find ordained heads, after asseverations so solemn, recklessly flinging aside the assumed garb of sanctity and giving evidence of the grossest sensual desires; if we find a majority of the priests of almost every sect anxious to heap up wealth, and thinking too lightly of the prevailing poverty among thousands of their fellow crea-

tures; if we find these clerical backsliders, forgetful of their own short comings, still calling on others to repent, what description of confidence can be placed in their sincerity? If other sinners, after ineffectual struggles to get rid of secular entanglements, resign themselves with apparent indifference to the gloomy future that may await them, what should be the hopeless condition of wanton reverends and unfaithful stewards? Pshaw! What care they? Look at their manner of life; the luxuries most of them enjoy; they revel in sweets, while many a starving member of the flock is languishing and despondent. What care most of these consecrated gourmonds for daily or hourly insinuations against them? What care they for charges against character and conduct too often only timidly urged? They boldly proclaim them calumnies! They denounce the motives of a doubting Thomas, and rise to insulted innocence, well knowing that so long as they have the confiding and devoted Annas, and Marthas, and Marys of the Church to advocate their cause, and to resent unholy imputations, submission must eventually follow. These are the living refutations priests bring forward; these are the telling facts which win back confidence, such are the appeals which the most eloquent accuser cannot withstand. No wonder that clerical corruption has so often to be overlooked, for, as it is, the secret of priestly power may no doubt be attributed in many cases to female influence; and experience has proved, time after time, that the wily pastor may too often derive his greatest strength and assurance from the weakness of credulous, affectionate, unsuspecting woman.

There are said to be angels in heaven who surround the celestial throne, and whose hosannas to the Great Supreme ascend for ever and ever. We know that there are angels on the earth who flutter around every temple, who fling sunshine into every place of worship, and who illuminate every altar; they sing the praises of their priest and prophet, and the grandest cathedral would be gloomy without their presence. These are the radiant visitants

that win men to devotion ; these are the glowing texts that teach the heart ; these are the evangelists that have given saints to every age ; and the sternest precepts delivered in the most formal tone of authority, would find many unbelieving ears, were it not that the harshest maxims are moulded into music, and rendered into melody, and echoed back to men's souls, by these beautiful angels of the temple.

The aspect of the bishop and the clergy, as they entered the church, was the very picture of humble piety. What a sudden change was here ! The display of meekness was admirable. The Right Reverend, ample lawn sleeves, with bent head, and gloved hands crossed on his breast, preceded by his verger, with silver wand, and followed by about a dozen of the clergy in robes, marched slowly up the aisle, while the organ poured forth a strain that was, at intervals, sublime beyond conception. Lo ! what divinity doth hedge in these apostolic ones. See the veneration they draw out on people's faces ! Wonderful conjuration ! The nobles and the gentry present look with pride upon these distinguished ambassadors of the Church, and upon the Church itself as being perhaps the most celebrated prop of Britain's national greatness. What confidence, enthusiastic credulity ! Are these common, ignorant gazers—the *plebs rustica et urbana*—who stand behind, impressed with the benefit of a State religion, or of any other religion ; do they share this same enthusiasm ? Can there possibly be a doubt of the tendency of their crude ideas relative to ecclesiasticism ? Are they growing irreverent ? Time may perhaps soon tell. Quaint revolutionary notions often generate and mature in the brain of a ploughman, that would be quickly stunted and withered under the mitre of the bishop. This may be an age of retrogression, for somehow the inspired conceptions of the Church are becoming stale and obsolete. Strange ! what can be the reason ? it is to be feared that thought is at the root of the matter, and that the towering cedars of our orthodox Lebanon, after centuries of

costly experimental culture, are getting sapless and withered. The Church admits that the age of miracles is past; it has no more to offer, and the moonlight visions of modern saints fade away in the day dawn. Delusion is dead to many; and priests who have been "overshadowing" truth in their secret places, begin to discover that skepticism has its birthplace upon the very steps of the altar.

His lordship of Storkchester, when seated upon his Episcopal throne, might be deemed a study for a dramatist; he tried to look like a man who had not a shilling beyond what would pay for his breakfast; and his reverend escort, like fishermen who had been toiling out all night, and had caught nothing. Amiable deceivers! Yet who, at this solemn moment, could think that this same humble bishop had an income, derived solely from his spiritual legerdemain, of over £10,000 a year—actually more than the united endowments of all the public charities and hospitals in the parish? Who could believe that this one man could earn more by his Episcopal trade in one day, than many a poor, honest toiler could earn by hard work during a whole year? Who could fancy that this bishop, and these wealthy rectors were, by a pious figure of speech, called "despised followers of the cross." Despised indeed? what a farce! and that these poor submissive curates, who had the same ordination as the most affluent clergy, are obliged to preach and appear respectable on a paltry allowance, scarcely beyond the ordinary earnings of a traveling tinker. What a fountain of purity and justice is this State Church! What gushing pity and charity swell out the lordly bosoms of its clerical magnates! Alas! it seems that ecclesiastical elevation has not always a tendency to expand the kindest impulses of our nature. Bishops are generally as sordid as common men; they mostly keep all they get. The poor are seldom benefitted by the death of a wealthy divine. Practical bequests are mostly for relatives; as if gold gained by the gospel should not be distributed outside of the Aaronic household.

After the ceremony of confirmation was over, the bishop delivered a very feeling charge to those upon whom he had just laid his Episcopal hands, and all seemed to be wonderfully edified, as if some prelatical or spiritual virtue had been imparted by the mere touch of a true successor of the Apostles. Imagination has wrought many a miracle; it may have still as much to do in curing a moral evil by the touch of a bishop, as it formerly had in curing a physical evil by the touch of a king. Any way, to all appearance, several persons looked more meet for heaven since the bishop had pronounced his cabalistic words, than they were before the service had commenced; and then, after his lordship had bestowed his solemn benediction upon the retiring congregation, the greater number of those who had recorded their Christian vows, hurried off to a neighboring barn to feast, and to dance, and to have a merry time during the remainder of the day *—the rector and some of the gentry having given an amount sufficient to furnish the items requisite and proper for this peculiar festival.

Shortly afterwards, the bishop entered the vestry in order to receive a formal address from the most distinguished among the laity of the parish. His reply was most touching and affectionate, reminding many of St. Paul's concluding words in his first Epistle to the Corinthians; and though he tearfully said: "Greet ye one another with a holy kiss," he, like a faithful pastor, warned them at the same time in these words: "If any man love not the Lord, let him be anathema maranatha."

When the oration was ended, his lordship, the clergy, and a select number of invited guests, were to dine at Parson Rockett's. The rector, of course, spared neither pains nor expense to get up something suitable for the great occasion. It was rather an exclusive affair—no ladies were present—the dinner was all that the greatest epicure could desire; the wines were such as to satisfy the taste of

* A common "wind-up," after Confirmation, in many parts of England.

the most fastidious *bon vivant*, and as soon as some of the reverend guests had been sufficiently stimulated, diffidence gave way, and the boldest opinions were ventured—even in the august presence of a bishop—on many of the prominent political, religious, and social topics of the day. Among the clergymen present, their ideas seemed to be as different as their persons. Though, as Churchmen, they had all subscribed to the famous Thirty-nine Articles—conscientiously, no doubt—yet strange to say, there were differences of opinion, just as conscientious, regarding the Ritual, the Athanasian Creed, the mode of Baptism, the Prayer Book, and even the very Scriptures. For instance, one clergyman would alter and expand the Ritual; he would have rich vestments, lighted candles, incense, and tinkling bells, and make church ceremonies altogether more attractive and imposing; another disdained all heathenish show; he would simplify the service, and purify the Church from every thing Judaical or Popish. One would rid the Athanasian Creed of its monstrous damnable clauses; another would retain every threat that might strike terror into unbelievers. A certain minister thought immersion of adults was the proper mode of baptism; another firmly believed that infant sprinkling was just as efficacious. One distinguished divine would revise the Prayer Book, and expunge from its pages vain repetitions, and every text from the Apocrypha, especially anything inserted from the book of Tobit; he never referred to that book, but he thought of Tobit and his sparrows; a story too puerile and silly for Christian ears; an opponent would not lessen the bulk of the Prayer Book for any consideration, that estimable book was compiled by eminent bishops, by some who had laid down their lives for the faith. Next to the Bible, it had his most devout veneration as being a blessing to the souls of men. The Apocryphal Scriptures had been singularly useful; for centuries they had been read in the primitive Church, and many learned and devout ministers, after much research, had asserted that these very Scriptures were just as much

inspired, and as authoritative, as those which had been retained. The pious story of Tobit and his sparrows, could, and ought to be, read with as much edification by Christians in general, as the story of Balam's ass, or that of Jonah and the whale, or other similar holy and credible narratives. One rector, on the other hand, broadly asserted, that not only Apocryphal readings, but every discrepancy as to time, place, and circumstance, and in fact every statement not sustained by scientific facts, or not in accordance with the advanced ideas of this enlightened age, should be eliminated from the holy Scriptures; to this, another rector tartly replied, that were such a process of expurgation resorted to, all that would be left of the Bible might be easily enclosed in his lordship's snuff-box.

These jarring sentiments among clergymen of the same church, were very amusing to some of the guests, who, perhaps, cared but little what Church they belonged to, so long as it was called the State Church. The Rev. Mr. Meade, who sat near the end of the table, listened to the foregoing clerical remarks with some surprise; he had often heard similar discordant sentiments uttered privately, or in a whisper, but now they were boldly spoken even in the presence of a chief shepherd. And though High Church, and Low Church, and Broad Church, and Narrow Church, and no church at all, views were expressed with the greatest freedom, the bishop appeared indifferent as to what was uttered by altitudinarians, latitudinarians, platitudinarians or attitudinarians; indeed, his lordship seemed at times to relish the discussion, ready to prompt one or another with a reply; and he would occasionally enjoy a hearty laugh at the evident discomfiture of some contesting divine who had incautiously gone beyond his depth in a too eager and confident defence of what has been called, with a kind of reverential boast, "the grand old story of the Pentateuch."

During the time so occupied in polemical discussion, the bishop, though listening at intervals to his debating

clergy, was mostly engaged in conversation with his old friend and host, Parson Rockett, on the merits of the winner of the stakes at the late Derby; and he would become almost absorbed in depicting the fine points of the most noted horses of the day. While at college, his lordship and the rector had backed many a fleet courser at Epsom, and at other places, and it was still, it might be said, a matter of harmless interest to renew an old theme that had enabled them to pass many a pleasant hour.

"Vanscourt," said the bishop, now addressing one of his chaplains who sat near him, "Have you nothing to say among these wranglers? But, O! I know you are a sad skeptic, and you are glad to hear those fellows tear theology to pieces. Is that not so?"

"You know, my lord," replied Mr. Vanscourt, "that if the wolves devour one another, it will be so much better for the flock. You are, of course, aware that some of our leading modern philosophers incline to think that theology itself is a ravening wolf which mankind ought to hunt down; and in my opinion, the priests themselves are now doing the work which the people ought to have done long ago. For ages the Church, like Saturn, has lived on its children—devoured its offspring. But Nemesis has come at last, and now the Church, like Niobe, may mourn over those who have departed; over many, my lord, who will never return."

CHAPTER XV.

DOUBTING CLERGY, EDUCATED HEATHEN, THE MERCHANDIZE OF SOULS.

THE Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, the bishop's favorite chaplain, was one of those clergymen of the Colenso type, whom his lordship was pleased to call eccentric. He was as reckless in reasoning on statements in the "Sacred Texts," as he would be on statements in Baron Munchausen or in Gulliver's Travels; and it was thought that he was even too ready, and too impolitic, to admit the conclusions which such reasoning might force upon him. Still, while willing to be numbered among the clergy, and to receive clerical pay, he would pass many a joke at the expense of things called sacred, and would fain be taken for a skeptic, just as a very numerous class of persons who are in reality skeptics, yet lacking moral courage, would like to pass current in Christian society as being truly orthodox. At times Mr. Vanscourt would startle his clerical friends with questions which were suggestive of any thing but confident belief in the inspiration of the scriptures, and though he was looked upon by some of the clergy as an "oddity," and by others as a very tottering pillar of the Church, yet so long as the spiritual ruler of Storkchester was satisfied with his ministrations, and content to retain him as his principal chaplain, of what use was it to complain, or even to remonstrate? There were many others such as Mr. Vanscourt within the pale; and when prelates dared to write heresy, and distinguish-

ed clergy to print reviews calculated to undermine the true faith, surely the mere words of this favorite chaplain might be overlooked. Furthermore, did not this "eccentric" priest know something of the acts of the undoubtedly orthodox clergy that was far, far worse than heterodox words, and more contaminating than the greatest skepticism? *

"But Vanscourt," again said his lordship in a quizzing manner, "while you stand in a pulpit and wear a gown, you must not hesitate to say something in defence of the faith. Some of our friends here try to make it appear that the gospels are mere fabrications from ancient legends, one gospel contradicting the other. Come, let us have a vindication or an exposition from you."

"My lord, I must admit my total inability to satisfy your lordship's astuteness upon points so dubitative. At best we can only guess as to whom the gospels can be ascribed. I am reluctantly obliged to say that these writings contain many contradictions which we cannot gloss over as Tertullian, Origen and Eusebius have done. Tertullian, you know, said that he believed a certain doctrine to be 'absolutely true because it was manifestly impossible,' and Eusebius would have gone further. But in these latter days we are obliged to give a more tangible reason for the faith that is in us. There is a track of doubt on every modern highway. I cannot assert that much learning will make men mad, but I am positive it will make them skeptical. Boys now laugh at the ogres that frightened their fathers, verifying the remark, that the creed of one age may be the romance of the next."

"Take care, Vanscourt, take care; if you must doubt on your travels and take it home, you should never bring it to church with you."

"But, my lord," returned the chaplain, "what a herculean task it would be were we obliged to try and reconcile the statements and doctrines of the original number of

* See Note 6.

gospels. If there are so many discrepancies in the *four* which we are blessed with, what a number there might be in the forty or fifty which you are aware were received by the ancient fathers of the Christian Church."

"Ah, Vanscourt, you ought to have lived in the times of these same primitive fathers. If we at this late period are so easily improved on as you think, what a field there might then have been for your critical talents among such men as Eusebius, who we must admit, was not over scrupulous in the inventing of so-called official records and miraculous legends, to gain believers. Pshaw! what was the real harm in that, if he made men better? You are too critical, Vanscourt; you would have made a capital Celsus."

"Thank you, my lord, for the compliment; I am glad you are willing to admit that Eusebius, and others of the Christian fathers, were not, as you are pleased to say, too scrupulous, in order to make their opinions popular. Though some of our divines still almost worship Eusebius, proof is now abundant that he dealt in wholesale fabrication; he would not hesitate to write a gospel himself were it necessary to convince others. His interpolation in Josephus, and his other pious frauds, stamp him as a master in the art of deception. Indeed, his motto might well have been—*Vulgus vult decipi—decipiat*.*

"Vanscourt, Vanscourt," said the bishop, laughing, "you are really another Celsus. You make no allowance whatever for the pious zeal of the early bishops; they had to accommodate themselves to the superstitions of ignorant pagans. If our great apostle thought it harmless to tell a little fib, to make converts, some excuse should be made for Eusebius. Paul said plainly, 'For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie, unto His glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?' What can you say to that?"

"I care not, my lord; a lie is a lie, whether spoken by

* The common people wish to be deceived—deceived let them be,

Peter, or Paul, or the angel Gabriel. Truth is a pillar that can stand alone; it needs not the buttress of falsehood to keep it perpendicular, and some of those, whom we called ignorant pagans, soon told us as much."

"No use, no use in speaking to you, Vanscourt; you are incorrigible. While many of our most eminent theologians admit that it is still a debatable question, whether we may not deceive the vulgar if it be for their own good; whether we may not do a little evil that good may come; you would have straight up and down perfection. No such thing is to be had. Vanscourt, take care; I lately heard one of our pious ministers prophesy that the death of Judas was in store for you."

"Prophets, my lord, cannot always be relied on. Oracles, prophets, seers, and soothsayers, are now rated by many as nothing beyond shrewd guessers or common fortune tellers. Some of our commentators have been sadly puzzled to know whether any prophecies have ever been fulfilled. Appropos of Judas, I must now seek information from you. What was the end of this disciple? I would like to know what kind of a death it is which our clerical friend says is in store for me. One of our scriptural accounts say that Judas went out and *hung* himself; another account of equal authority intimates that he performed *hari kari*, as they still do in the East, that is, he burst asunder in the middle, and that all his bowels gushed out. Now will your lordship be pleased to enlighten me on this subject? How did Judas die?"

It is not known whether the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt ever got a satisfactory answer to this question, his lordship's attention having been called in another direction. Different subjects, by different parties, had been discussed at both ends of the table, matters which seemed to attract much attention, and one which related to the very strange remarks made by the Archbishop of Canterbury,* at a late

* At Carlisle—1872. The above remarks of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Hindoo replies, are an abridgement of those published in the *London Times*,

missionary meeting. "His Grace," in urging the necessity for greater missionary exertions among the heathen, was reported to have said, when referring to the danger which he thought existed by an increased intercourse with the great number of Hindoo, Chinese, and Japanese merchants and students in London, that "In our metropolis we are brought so near heathenism of the worst class, that, unless we take some steps for the converting of the heathen, *the heathen will be converting us*. For this is not merely an imaginary idea, I am afraid to say it, but I cannot help thinking that this great proximity of the East to ourselves, has somehow or other, affected the philosophy on which the young men feed in our great seminaries of learning; that men of learning have more toleration for that denial than they had in the olden times; that systems which have existed for centuries in the extreme lands of heathenism, are finding some sort of echo even among the literature and philosophy of this Christian country."

The Rev. Mr. Meade, who heard this extract read, was amazed at such an admission from the Primate of the great wealthy Established Church of England; amazed to find him concede the possibility of the heathen "converting us," and to find his logic floundering through weak expressions, such as "some how or other," "some sort of echo," phrases unsuitable for the capacity of a school boy. What! after all the treasure that has been wrung from the nation in support of the popular faith, after the assumed purer faith having been propped and supported for centuries by kings and rulers; after the powerful aid of money and sword; after the vast expenditure which has been incurred to Christianize such heathens; after prayer and the persecution of unbelievers; and after the Divine promise of support! What! all to be endangered by the too free intercourse with a mere half hundred of educated heathens; a danger of being converted to heathenism by the very people among whom, and for whose supposed benefit, we have been wasting missionary lives and missionary treasure, while leaving

British heathens—a class too ignorant and too brutal to be compared with Asiatics—in a state of the lowest degradation. O! your Grace of Canterbury, O! wealthy Primate, what an admission! What an inducement for the intelligent Brahmins, and Buddhists, and Parsees, to take your fears into consideration, to return missionary compliments, and to mercifully send over a number of their zealous educated priests to heathenize and elevate the lowest caste of British barbarians who are such a crying disgrace to the State Church and to civilization. O! Right Honorable and Most Reverend "Canterbury! O! prince of Lambeth! your pusillanimous admission should make you ashamed of your spiritual pretensions. After this, your apostolic twaddle, and your consecrated imposture, should be treated with contempt; you should be muled by all Christendom, were it only to the paltry extent of one year's salary; you would hardly miss £15,000—(\$75,000,) and it might be far better thrown away in sending one or two dozen extra missionaries to India, than to waste the same amount of the harder earned money of the people by leaving it with you.

The remarks of the Archbishop soon elicited pointed replies from educated Hindoos. One, among many forcible things, wrote, that: "In these days of insincerity and hypocrisy, when men are paid for declaring opinions and propagating beliefs they do not believe in, it is not a novel thing to see the High Priest of the Established Church expressing opinions remarkable alike for their inaccuracy and want of charity." The foregoing part of this sentence was such a hit—a very hard hit too—at the position occupied in the church by Rev. gentlemen like Mr. Vanscourt, that nearly every one at the table applauded the palpably correct statements of the Hindoo. And the same educated heathen further wrote: "Such of the English statesmen and officials who watch the transition the Indian mind is passing through, and the rapid strides, intellectual and moral, which are the products of a liberal education; will bear me out in saying that the religious belief (if by relig-

gious belief, is meant a system which inculcates doctrines, of future life, charity, etc.,) of the so-called heathens, is as enlightened as that professed, (but not implicitly followed) by the class whose views are echoed by the Archbishop. These heathens have toleration for their fundamental creed. That no religion can be considered enlightened which is not tolerant, is a truth taught by history. We (heathens) infer from certain expressions which escaped His Grace that toleration has no recognized place in the Christian religion," and the same heathen further added, "it is as unlikely for the heathen in London to embrace the belief inculcated by the Archbishop, as it is for Mr. Stuart Mill, or Professor Tyndall to believe in the commonly received form of Protestantism."

And, again, His Grace was replied to by another heathen, who wrote to express the "intense pain," with which he had read the "unjust attack," made, "by the head of the Church on us heathens." "To the educated heathen sojourning here it is a matter of merriment to see the different sects of Christians keeping up an incessant warfare with each other." "On the other hand, it will do immense good to His Grace to learn, that the most of us heathens from India have an unmitigated hatred for those who, having it in their power to ascertain the truth, do not study accuracy, who do not care to read the works of heathen writers on religion and philosophy, and yet abuse them and those who follow them, simply because they are heathen, who have not yet learned the simple lesson of speaking without disrespect about the religious opinions of visitors to their country; and, lastly, who call us heathens 'of the worst class' for adopting the views of celebrities like Mr. Mill, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Darwin, Prof. Huxley and others."

The Rev. Mr. Meade, who had heard this report read by one of the Rev. gentlemen present felt that the remarks of these heathens were but too true; that not only intelligent Christians but Christian priests, do not care to "study accuracy" as to the position of unbelievers, and do not

desire to read the works of heathens or of infidels, just as if it were possible to come to a fair decision without hearing both sides impartially. He felt that priestly misrepresentations, though as common as ever against heathens and unbelievers, were, after all, but little heeded, while the reasoning of Mill, and Spencer, and the scientific doctrines of Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall, were receiving increased attention even when religious creeds and revelations were being declared illusory by the startling facts of science.

When the reading of the Archbishop's address, and the Hindoo replies thereto had been finished, the greater number of clergymen present, as well as Mr. Meade were altogether more inclined to applaud the manly sentiments of the educated heathens than to defend the craven position of the Archbishop.

The conversation then turned upon advowsons. Two or three of the wealthy rectors mentioned several choice places where capital livings could be had for a mere song, and one of these gentlemen just then happened to see in the paper in which he had been reading about, "The Archbishop and the Heathens," a number of clerical advertisements for the sale of advowsons, one of which was as follows:

"ADVOWSON FOR SALE BY PRIVATE CONTRACT.*

Advowson of a living in the south of England. Population 250, wholly agricultural. *No Dissent*. Fine old church, lately restored. Capital house, containing twelve bed and three sitting-rooms, office, stabling, etc., complete. Productive garden, hot-house, conservatory. Dry soil and mild climate. Good market town. Communication to London and all parts of the country by railway. Estimated value £520 per annum. Age of the present incumbent 66."

There was considered a chance for speculation and clerical call; only a population of 250, *no dissent*, the incumbent 66, and a chance of his being sickly. This was said to be the cream of all similar advertisements in that day's paper, and was pronounced just the thing for any gentle-

* This advertisement appeared in the *Church Record*, with others of similar purport.

man present who had an extra worthless stupid son to be provided for. Indeed it was believed that none of the clerical intelligence offices in London could furnish better.*

Alluding to this advertisement, an English paper, the *Birmingham Morning Post*, remarks :

“That is a delightful touch—“no dissent”—so courteous so Christian, and so expressive; as if one should say of a house, ‘no bad smells,’ ‘no vulgar neighbors,’ ‘no vermin.’ Then beside the absence of Dissenters, the living is otherwise desirable. Two pounds a head for looking after 250 people, with twenty pounds over, is not bad pay, especially when we consider the ‘fine old church,’ the ‘capital house,’ with its twelve bed-rooms, garden, hot-house, conservatory, stabling, and other appurtenances so well known to ministers among the early Christians. The age of the present incumbent only sixty-six, is a drawback; he might live twenty years longer, and then the purchase of this ‘cure of souls’—fancy the connection of such phrases!—would be a bad speculation. Still the thing is so very tempting that buyers will no doubt come forward, and the right of shepherding and shearing these 250 sheep in the South of England will pass from hand to hand for a consideration like any piece of merchandise. We wonder what St. Paul would have thought of the business. But then in his day they didn’t take the *Record*.”

The clergyman laid down the paper, and, while the conversation continued, Mr. Meade took up another journal and glanced at its contents, and another advertisement soon attracted his attention; it read :

Clerical.—“Wanted, a Curate for the Warrington Parish Church, stipend first year £150, second year, £120. to undertake the whole duty while the rector is away, about nine months in the year, and to superintend the making of the rector’s hay, etc. Apply to the Rev. W. Queckett, rector of Warrington.”†

Ah, thought Mr. Meade what a chance this would be for

*See Note 7.

† This advertisement appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of July 30th, 1870.

me, what an advance on my present stipend but why should it be £30 less the second year? Still, however, at that, the income would be fully fifty per cent. over what I have now, and for Esther's sake I would superintend the making of hay or even make it myself. But then, again thought he, even if I should get this position, how could I leave my poor wife's grave; how could I leave the venerable church in which I have so long preached; how could I leave my old parishioners. Where would be good old Stephen's greeting smile in the morning, or his kind adieu at night; who could serve Esther so faithfully? Ah no, dear old Pendell, I cannot leave thee, and when my sun sets, as it soon may, I must rest on thy bosom, and wither away among thy autumn leaves.

No; great as the inducement might be—an increase of stipend by fifty per cent., and the rector absent nine months in the year, with the privilege of making hay—yet the poor curate of Pendell would forgo all rather than sunder old ties; he would still prefer to submit to the dubious attentions, and to the increased but hardly welcome visits of his rector, Mr. Morton, rather than accept a better paying position, and a curacy where his Rev. employer might be present only during three months in the whole year.

Other topics were then discussed by the convivial clergy, *Unbelief* and *Dissent* were blamed for the dissatisfaction created among agricultural laborers; "strikes" and "unions" were denounced. The bishop expressed himself strongly against such combinations; the interest of the landed gentry and employers should be considered paramount; and declared with some vehemence, that, "itinerant agitators," who speak in behalf of the working men, and who disturb their minds; "should be ducked in a horse pond;"* and a nobleman present approving of his Lordship's remarks, advised that all who joined a union,

* The very words of the bishop of Gloucester at a late meeting in England—1872.

“should be deprived of their allotments” (turned off their land) “giving no hope even of a potato patch.”*

The question of the growing insubordination—as it was called—of working men, and the increasing spirit of independence manifested by them toward their superiors and employers led to a conversation concerning the lawless people of the Heath. The unfortunates were bitterly denounced as cut-throats and vagabonds; as benighted allies of republicans, infidels, and dissenters; and no words of condemnation were sufficiently strong to express the feelings of the Rev. Mr. Rockett against these violators of law and order. His position as a rector had been scoffed at, and his power as a magistrate not only treated with contempt, but the vile herd, ungrateful for his lenient exercise of authority in dealing with the thieves, poachers, vagabonds, and gypsies, that rambled from the Devil’s Dale to prey on honest people—had sent some of those very wretches to lie in wait, and actually to plunder himself, as it was he was comparatively powerless against them—they conspired to protect one another. A bailiff whom he had sent out some time ago with a warrant, had been nearly beaten to death by more than fifty of these cowardly scoundrels, and though months had passed the

* The very recommendation of a “Noble Duke” at the same time—a dissenting minister probably alluded to the Bishop and the Duke in the following reference to an address—

Mr. Spurgeon in a recent address in his tabernacle took occasion accidentally to refer to the Warwickshire farm laborers’ strike. He remarked that, in many instances, clergymen were blind leaders of the blind, and if a poor man went to a Dissenting chapel he was subjected to a kind of ostracism by the clergyman and the squires. The condition of the agricultural laborers was most shameful, and he had not rejoiced in anything more than when he heard they had begun to stick and combine for their own interest. He wondered they had not gone out on strike long ago. No doubt if wages were raised farmers would complain they were pinched. In that case the farmers must pinch the landlords. He had not a great deal of sympathy for the latter, for there were numbers who had their thousands of acres and who could stand a little squeezing without being reduced to abject poverty thereby. Negro slavery was nothing to the treatment of the laborers, and it ought to be denounced by every honest man and earnest tongue.

man had scarcely yet recovered, and the injured rector declared his intention of applying to high authority in order to rid the entire Kingdom of such wretches.

There is something in human nature which will resist oppression whether it be clothed in tawdry robes of state or in the most gorgeous habiliments of priestly power. The ruffianism too often displayed by a harrassed, hungry peasantry, is frequently the fiendish shape or creation of impotence against injury. And until rulers, priests, and philosophers, are able to satisfy the impoverished, why one man should be born rich and another poor; and be able to justify the great inequality of our present social condition, so long will men believe they have been wronged; and that belief will cause them to either unite in a resistance to oppression or to become degraded and dangerous; talk of natural depravity as we like, wealth and repletion may make men insolent and mischievous, but poverty, pinching poverty, is the principal source of crime.

CHPATER XVI.

A MISSIONARY EXCURSION.

THOUGH the Rev. Mr. Rockett, rector of Betnall had every comfort that a reasonable man could desire; though he was a favored priest of the Established Church, and a magistrate of the county; though he exercised much social influence, and might have done much good both to the rich and to the poor, yet he never considered it his duty to look beyond himself, or the nominal duties which his position required him to perform. He was hasty and tyrannical in disposition, and was certainly anything but a favorite with the half-starved people of the Heath, for his leniency was dreaded and his mercy was terrible. Thieves and paupers he treated alike: and for the most trifling cause he sent men, women, and children—many of whom were hungry weak and sickly—to the hard labor and wretched fare of the dreaded workhouse, rather than permit vagrants to wander about or to beg for a mouthful of bread; for this Christian minister had an idea—one perhaps not peculiar to himself—that a man who was very poor and very importunate, must, as a matter of course, be a very great scoundrel. So he had a ready remedy; he could not compound felony with a penitent thief—had he only stolen an apple; he could not conscientiously show mercy to a poacher, and as he thought a very destitute person or a pauper was a disgusting object to be seen at large, he committed all without distinction, and let the mercy of the law take its course—the only mercy he could ever show.

It might, however, be alleged that he had some reason for this magisterial rigor. Had he not lost rabbits and bull dogs occasionally; had not his garden been ransacked in spite of his man traps, had not his favorite racer been intentionally lamed; had not his harness been cut to pieces, and his carriage wheels rolled away; and had not nearly every game cock worth keeping been stolen from him? And the pilfering of the last fowl of this kind caused him to be greatly exasperated; and though he had not been lately troubled, by those from the Heath, he thought it was because he had been more watchful. Paupers he detested for their craving, and gypsies he hated, as a race of wandering superstitious wretches, whom he would exterminate.

Most of the clergy present had heard of the "lawless rabble" of the Heath and shared the feeling of Mr. Rockett against them. The Rev. Mr. Meade alone ventured to say a few words in their behalf—the only words he had spoken openly at the rector's table. He stated that the condition of these people had been lately much improved. A wealthy gentleman, now the owner of the old Mayston estate, had returned scarcely twelve months since, from India, and had determined to reside on the property. It had been said that the people of the Heath never could be civilized until they had been converted, but the gentleman, though he had not made any efforts to convert, had undoubtedly reformed them in a great degree, and he hoped that in a short time the marked change in their circumstances and conduct would meet even the approval of the rector of Betnall.

"Reformed, did you say? Why who or what can reform them or improve their condition?" almost roared out the rector. "I care not who goes among them, saint or sinner, 'twill be all alike. Reform, indeed! Did they not disdain the pure gospel we would have sent? Did they not afterwards try the spurious stuff that a few Methodist ranters tried to cram them with? And, even after that, not one of our curates, no, not one, dared venture

among them to counteract false teaching, Don't tell *me* about any chance of their reformation; neither St. Paul nor the Archbishop of Canterbury could do any thing with them. Transportation or the gallows, is, and can be the only remedy."

"Now I really think," said the bishop, "that here, even at home, right as it were in our very midst, would be a fine field for the exhibition of the Primate's missionary zeal. We have tried India almost in vain; we have had costly experience in other countries, and as the Archbishop of Canterbury is an authority, unless, as he says, we look sharp the Hindoos will be converting us. Glorious result after all our missionary efforts! Britain to be Brahminized in the nineteenth century. By the by, who is this new comer? Is he one of these self-same Hindoos whom our Primate dreads?"

"No, my Lord," humbly replied Mr. Meade, "he is an English gentleman who had spent many years in India—a Christian gentleman, I presume, my lord, who to my knowledge has already done much good and acquired much influence over the people of the Heath."

"Well, then, he must be one of the Archbishop's Hindoos," again roared out Mr. Rockett, "he can be no Christian. Christianity and the example of Christian people have totally failed to influence such fiends. No, take my word for it, the fellow is a Hindoo."

A genuine laugh followed this remark of the excited rector of Betnall.

"Strange, very strange," said the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, ironically, "if Christianity itself has failed to benefit these ignorant creatures, surely the every day life and example of educated clergymen of our Apostolic Church, ought to have settled the matter, and convinced them, at any rate, that our form of godliness is great gain. Pon my honor, this discrimination is greatly at fault."

"Vanscourt," said the bishop, humorously, to his chaplain, "I've a great mind to send you over to the Heath to try your spiritual skill. Come, what do you say?"

“My lord, I feel myself, alas, too feeble for such a mission. The Gospel in good hands—in your own, for instance—might do much. We know that most professing Christians prefer a gilt-edged Bible to a very plain one; and I think that gold, with the Gospel, has made our faith attractive among heathens, when the Gospel alone would be rejected. The distribution of a little gold, or its equivalent among an impoverished people, might create on the Heath a wonderful relish for our doctrines. I think if a man were hungry, he would be inclined to pray for bread first, and for his soul afterward. Now, my lord, as you are far, far more wealthy than I am, and as you possess, of course, more spiritual gifts than all of us here together, I think, therefore, my lord,” said the chaplain, bowing with much humility, “that *you* should be the missionary to the Heath.”

“Very good, indeed; well done! well argued, Vanscourt,” said the bishop, laughing. “Upon my word, if I thought it was quite safe, I would go down among these British heathens and see for myself. Of course you would come, Vanscourt?”

The chaplain, with seeming hesitation, spread his hands by his sides, and bowed acquiescence; and then, as if with a timid voice, replied:

“Where your lordship would choose to go, I dare not refuse to follow; but, would it not, would it not, your lordship, would it not be better that we here should all go together—all together, your lordship? What, my lord, were we obliged to fight our way in, and fight our way out among those evil ones? Let us all go together, my lord—would it not be much, very much better?”

Another hearty laugh followed the simulated fear of the chaplain. The rector of Betnall really felt uneasy at the proposal, but was ashamed to exhibit the least apprehension. Mr. Morton, the rector of Pendall, wished to plead some excuse; and other clergymen present, would prefer to enjoy social conversation over the rector's good wine or brandy, rather than be made targets of, or be

pelted with stones, or even hallooed after by a ragged, rascally mob away out on this vile Heath; but the bishop having expressed his determination to go, the Reverend clergy all seemed, like other servile beings, to comply with alacrity.

The Rev. Mr. Meade again ventured to assure his lordship and all present, that they might now go to the Heath with perfect safety. The visit might be the production of much good; his lordship would see for himself, and would, no doubt, be pleased to find so many evidences of improvement.

“By the by,” said Mr. Vanscourt, “this intended visit reminds me of another singular contradiction which our translators must have overlooked, and which our commentators have as yet failed to reconcile. We are informed that an august personage, with his attendance, being once on his way to Sodom, to see for himself whether that city was as bad as had been represented, entered the tent of Abraham on the plains of Mamre; conversed face to face with Abraham, and Sarah, his wife; had his feet washed, and partook of cakes, milk, butter and veal—refreshments set before him; and yet, in another place, we are told that—‘No man hath seen God at any time’—that no man can see him and live—‘Whom no man hath seen, or can see.’ Verily, my lord and Reverend gentleman, this is a singular contradiction; and I would respectfully suggest, that those learned and pious men now engaged in a fresh revision of the Bible, should try and reconcile these conflicting statements, or else alter the text, as you know it was common to do in other days; otherwise, we may expect a fresh brood of skeptics every year, who will reason and reason, until they make most people believe that religion is but superstition, and that our apostolic authority but mere empty pretension.”

“Now, Vanscourt,” replied his lordship, “if our visit to this modern Sodom is likely to be attended with danger, you had better suggest an humble prayer, rather than raise another skeptical hobgoblin to frighten us away from

our true faith. We want no more emendations; we have, I fear, conceded too much altogether. The Bible as it stands is well able to take care of itself without any of your suggested expurgations. But we must go among these wild people. I think it is our duty, particularly now that there is a little danger."

Mr. Meade re-assured his lordship, and stated that by starting at once they could be all safely back by dusk.

The bright sunlight of an early autumn afternoon spread its radiance over the wide plain, and the well defined shadows, scattered here and there, added nearly as much to the rural scenery as the light that rested upon the waving branches, or that flickered among the restless leaves of the scattered trees. Ruminating cattle rested in the shade, or stood at leisure by the road side, quiet flocks fed or lay on green spots in the distance, and the white-washed cabins—not the rude, wretched abodes that they once were—seemed to smile a welcome to the visitor, while tidy looking women, surrounded by playing children, sat with plying needle on the door-steps. Far and near in every direction a number of men were ploughing, and leveling, and fertilizing the long neglected soil. The deep, muddy pits and ditches had been filled up, piles of brick and rubbish had been removed, the long, unsightly sheds had been torn down, and much of the material used in order to make the dwellings more capacious and comfortable. The chapel had been turned into a neat schoolhouse which was well attended, the "Rook's Nest" had been demolished, and the "Bull Dog" had been well cleaned and repaired, and was now a kind of store house containing tools, implements, necessary supplies, etc., such as might be required by a busy agricultural population. What a change within one year! There were no half drunken loiterers to be found, none such watching or waiting to rob or abuse a stranger, no cruelty to animals, no brutal fights, no overworked women or hungry, suffering children to be longer seen; all seemed to be buoyed up with hope and confidence in the kind encouragement of one

man, and all seemed ready and willing to remain and trust in him. So far only two persons had become dissatisfied, Tom Slaughter and Ned Bogg, the once thriving landlords—one of the Rook's Nest and the other of the Bull Dog—they saw nothing but ruin to them in the changed condition of affairs, and, as they could not be induced to stay, they had left the place in disgust, never to return.

On this pleasant afternoon the most tame or sombre scenery would lose its gloom; the steady improvement of this part of the Mayston estate, in so short a period, made the once desolate Heath look cheerful and inviting, and as the bishop of Storkchester and his clergymen were driven slowly across the wide plain, he was surprised to find it so different from that which he had expected. His lordship's carriage took the lead; no wild mob threatened, no one with felonious intent crossed his path. Those working on either side merely paused to look after the carriages as they passed along, and then quietly resumed their labor. Harry Tamblin, who was now a kind of overseer on this part of the estate, happened to recognize the Rev. Mr. Meade, and he civilly offered to conduct the gentlemen about the plain and show them what improvements had been already made, and what were contemplated. Mr. Meade expressed his thanks, but told him he need not leave his business. Upon inquiry for Mr. Valiant he was told that that gentleman was then in Ireland; and though he had been absent from the estate for more than a month, things went on with as much regularity as if he were present. Every man seemed inclined to do all in his power to second the efforts of his generous benefactor, and it was a pleasure to witness the earnest endeavors all made to break up the hardened surface of the land, and to make mellow and enrich the callous soil in which their hearts lay; and in which they now felt that they already had, for the first time, the sacred natural right of ownership. Harry Tamblin seemed specially pleased at the confidence reposed in him by Mr. Valiant, and to all

appearance, the greatest union and harmony prevailed among those sturdy laborers, who, scarcely a year back, were dreaded by nearly all, as villains and outlaws, and despised by their so-called civilized neighbors.

Strange as it may be, the rector of Betnall, the Rev. Mr. Rockett, felt rather disappointed and irritated to think that so little notice was taken of himself, of the bishop, or of any of the clergymen present. A few civil words had been spoken to Mr. Meade, but nothing approaching an insult had been offered to the now defiant rector, who really expected—even almost hoped—that he and his friends might be mobbed or otherwise maltreated; they were not, as yet, even treated with contempt, nothing more than ordinary indifference, an indifference that was, at the time, more galling to the pride of the rector than a direct indignity. He was really amazed to find that his predictions concerning the people of the Heath were not verified, and at the moment he would have been better pleased had a dozen drunken ruffians waylaid the bishop and clergy then and there, rather than they should return favorably impressed with the place or the people.

The only persons on the Heath not seen engaged at hard labor, were a few gypsy stragglers vending little articles, or mending tin ware or other utensils in some by-place. These itinerants reminded the bishop of what he had heard of the gypsies, and he at once expressed a desire to visit their camp. They would then be among real heathens, and might he not be able to truly assert that this excursion was one of a missionary character.

In a short time they reached the gypsy camp. These peculiar people still preferred to live by themselves in huts and tents; and as the new owner of the estate was very kind to them, they seemed to be perfectly content with their nanner of life. The bishop's carriage stopped in front of the principal tent; Zingari's. The old gypsy woman was seen sitting under the shade of a large oak tree, a little boy stood near her; and about a dozen other gypsy men and women were variously occupied around a

few other tents close by. His lordship looked down with some surprise, from his seat in the carriage, at the supposed queen of the wild race, and as he thought this was a fit opportunity to commence his first missionary exhortation he addressed her: "Well, dame, we have come out here to see you, just to see you; I'm glad we've met. You have, I am told, lived here in this curious way for a long time, yet I've never seen you before—you do not, I suppose, know who I am?"

Zingari was dressed in her usual fashion; she was almost always prepared to receive visitors—for she was generally much sought after—and as usual she was knitting. She seemed quite collected, and scarcely looked up at the new comers.

"I know who you are, and we have never met here before."

These words spoken calmly and in a significant tone, rather surprised most of the clergymen present.

"Oh, oh,—perhaps so"—replied the bishop, "many of course know me whom I do not know."

"You know me well, and will never forget me," followed Zangari in the same significant manner.

"That may be, that may be, dame, but I really cannot at present think who you are."

"I could bring a matter to your remembrance," said she, "that might assist you."

"You probably could," he replied, "but 'tis of no consequence, no consequence; we have merely come here as a duty to give you our best advice and instruction."

"Hear him!" said Zingari, looking around at her gypsy companions, "who wants either your advice or your instruction," and her words had a scornful meaning.

"Well perhaps *you* do," continued the bishop, now determined to do actual missionary duty, "perhaps you, dame, and your friends here might listen to our message and be benefited, you are very old, very old indeed, and cannot expect to live much longer. You and your people are very superstitious, and you yourself, I am told, have

practised on the credulous; and without using a harsh expression, you have taken money from poor people for fortune-telling. Now my good dame, this is wrong, very wrong, for which the Almighty will hold you answerable. We now wish you to reform; we, as God's messengers, would pray you to abandon your error, and accept truth." The bishop's manner was calm and confident, and his seeming sincerity won looks and nods of pious approval from nearly every one of his clerical attendants.

The loud laugh of the old gypsy woman startled all present; even two or three of the gypsy men sprang up and ran toward her, scarcely knowing what they did.

His lordship's look was one of blank amazement, and when he saw the woman stately and erect, with outstretched arms before him, he instinctively shrank back into the corner of his carriage, as if anticipating an immediate attack.

"God's messenger!" she exclaimed, and her mocking laugh could now be heard away out on the Heath. "O! what vile assurance! what audacity to come here to see me on such an errand! Do I not know you, you prince of hypocrites, you arrant impostor? Do I not know ye all, you race of devouring beasts?"

"Silence! you infernal old wretch," now roared out Parson Rockett. The bishop quickly raised his hand, and with nervous gesture waved it rapidly, as if most anxious to keep the excited rector quiet.

"I will speak here, with the heavens above me," continued Zingari, "I did not ask you to come, and now you shall listen. Did you come here to have me accept your stale plagiarisms for truth? Would you bring me doctrines as original that were old to my race ten thousand years before the time of your reputed Moses? You have robbed our Vedas to form your creed. You have got your Old book and your New book—the Bible—a thing of yesterday; both, as you try to believe, inspired. Inspired? Why, they have not even the merit of novelty. Your old book is full of our ancient rites and ceremonies; your new

book is but a re-hash of our doctrines; our Christna is your Christ; and your new fangled creed of eighteen hundred years is yet unknown to three-fourths of mankind, and even rejected in the very land of its birth, and is so like ours that you have dared to assert, contrary to plain facts, that ours is taken from yours. *You talk to me of truth—that which you have never sought for. You all chatter back like magpies the few words you have learned from your grandfathers, and you do not look further—you dare not hear both sides—'twould be your destruction.*”

The excited rector of Betnall was again about to make a sharp reply, but was prevented by a sudden look from the bishop, who now felt somewhat reassured, and he again addressed his venerable opponent:

“Dame, you are far too hasty, too hasty; we have the truth, of this we are assured. We do not want to argue with you; but what have you done to gain true knowledge? We are confident that our religion is not a thing of yesterday.”

“O, yes, you are confident because it is popular hereabouts; you are assured of its truth because it gives you paying positions. You don’t want to argue because your priestly presumption could be no gainer. No, you would prefer to lock up thought and put the key in your pocket; but this is what I have done to gain some knowledge. I have read that paper idol of yours from beginning to ending, from Genesis to Revelation, yes, every word; and what is it? But a mere scrap book from our ancient creed. Now, have you ever read our Vedas?”

“I cannot say that I have,” replied the bishop. “But, dame, a discussion of this kind is unseemly; you are too positive in your error.”

“Am I? And what has yours been so far but a life of vileness and pretension? You tell me I cannot live long; but hear me. Old as I am, I shall survive you; your days will soon be numbered.” Here the bishop’s cheek was seen to blanch. “You tell me that I have practised on the credulous, and have taken from the poor; yet, poor as I

am, the little which I have privately given might count equal to your own ostentatious alms. But on whose credulity have you practised? What have you been doing? Is not your trade a deception, only submitted to because it is popular here in Europe? You are servile to a myth because it brings you money; and servile priests have made a servile people. If I have, as you say, taken money from the poor, whether I have given value or not is best known to those who have dealt with me. But what have you given to rich or to poor for what you have taken for your soothsaying? What a wolfish conscience you have to accept the pile of gold that you get every year, while thousands of your fellow creatures, even more worthy than you, are houseless and starving; but I've been only a common fortune teller. What were your prophets but such, whose predictions have never yet been fulfilled? Ah, Thomas Sumpter, apostolic knave, I know you well, and all the conscience or honor that you ever possessed might be hidden in a poppy flower."

"Now you deal in falsehoods," quickly retorted the Bishop, getting rather angry. "Woman I know you not; you know nothing of me."

"Do I not? I know you and all your race. Do I not know those hireling expounders of godliness, whose obtrusive cunning stalks about in the guise of simplicity? Whose cupidity is fed by the ostentatious doling out of pence to the poor in the presence of the wealthy; who rail against riches in order to become rich, who pray for humility in order to obtain power, who are weak-kneed where there is danger, and formidable where there is no foe, and who are sycophantic to tyrants, and arrogant to the oppressed? O ye meek wolves! ye affectionate vultures! O, ye would be lords of heaven and of earth, what a world this would-be were ye possessed of unlimited power?"

"Vile woman, your mouth should be stopped," exclaimed the bishop.

"Ay, that's your plan; that's your favorite mode of argument; but you can't stop me. I know ye too well, ye

canting hypocrites who revel in deceit. I know ye, placid schemers, who proclaim toleration, yet fiercely persecute, who denounce slavery, yet keep the mind in bondage. O, ye proud-unassuming, ye humble-arrogant knaves, ye specious frauds that feed man upon myths which many of yourselves reject! O, ye race of sophistical, consecrated impostors, where would progress be if left to your control? see what confusion you have wrought by your creeds and confessions; see what you have done by your prayers and your pretensions. O, ye living lies that hoard up gold in the midst of poverty, and that neglect black crime in your own country to preach repentance in foreign lands. O, ye beggars, ye plotters, ye pretenders, ye evil angels, see what a wreck ye have altogether made of this beautiful world! I know ye!"

"Infamous, unscrupulous woman," retorted his lordship, "you are a defamer; you know nothing of us, you know not one present, not one." and now the heightening color flushed the bishop's face.

Zingari fixed her black eye on him for a moment and then slowly said: "Viper, I know you too well—perhaps you think that like yourself I have forgotten Agnes."

"Woman," said he, now startled and angry, "you are an impostor, a vile wretch, you never saw her face—never—I know not of whom you speak."

"Do you not?" replied she calmly, "Look there and see if you can recognize any one." Zingari then walked slowly to the carriage; she extended her right arm so as to bring her hand within ten or twelve inches of the bishop's face, this hand was partly doubled in order to hold a small circular mirror of polished steel or silver, about the size of a crown piece; the face of this little mirror was slightly convex, and when she presented it to the bishop it had a dim appearance, similar to that which the breath might produce on a polished surface. The bishop's eyes seemed to rest involuntarily on the mirror; presently in the center of it a bright spot appeared which grew slowly larger and larger until it neared the

edge of the mirror, and then the bishop's gaze became intense when he saw what seemed to be the reflection of the face of a beautiful gypsy girl, whose age might be about twenty years. The face had a very wan, sad expression, and at the lower corner of each side of the mouth, there seemed to be veritable little blood marks; and though the bishop would have fain withdrawn his eyes, he still gazed and now actually shuddered.

"That's a fraud—another of your impositions," cried out Parson Rockett who sat beside the bishop, "I can see nothing, neither can any one else," and the angry rector snatched the mirror, and with a hasty fling tried to send it far into the brushwood where it never should be found. He then turned a defiant look upon the old gypsy woman, and was himself amazed to see her now standing a few feet distant, and holding out in full view before all, the very mirror which he fancied he had just thrown to a great distance.

"This doesn't part from us as easily as you imagine," said Zingari still holding out the mirror. "If I am an impostor, you will admit that my sleight-of-hand is such as you do not often witness."

Though the bishop sat silent and evidently subdued, the rector of Betnall grew now more interested, and tried to believe that in his excitement he had failed to get hold of the mirror, and he demanded that it should be placed in his hands for the purpose of satisfying all that he could send it beyond the reach of its owner.

"One trial must answer," said Zingari, "beware how you make an another attempt."

"Just what I expected you would do if put to the test," shouted Mr. Rockett. Two or more of the clergymen now asked to see the mirror. She held her hand before the face of the Rev. Mr. Morton the rector of Pendell, but the surface of the mirror was quite dim. "There is nothing for you at present," said Zingari, "there may be if you ever see it again."

"Ay, I see how it is," cried Mr. Morton, "a downright

deception! You have imposed on his lordship as you have on most others. You work on people's imagination, and on their fears."

Zingari made no reply, and as Mr. Meade the curate of Pendell, stood close to her she bade him look. The mirror was at first dim, then it became clear as it did for the bishop, and lo, the curate was amazed to see the very likeness of his son who was in India, and whom he had not seen for years.

"Well, is that a deception?" she enquired.

Mr. Meade felt rather timid to make an acknowledgment after what his rector had asserted.

"I cannot say that it is," replied he in a hesitating manner.

"And yet now you are afraid to say so," said Zingari. "How like you are to those others; just as Christian priests always do, for while they shout for truth, they are every ready to deny its claims should it come into conflict with their preconceived notions."

The silence of the curate seemed to be an admission of the truth of what she had said. "You know the face then?"

"I do," answered Mr. Meade.

"Well, then," she continued, "you have got another at home, but be watchful of your bird, for there's a hawk around your dwelling that would do it harm," and she gave a significant glance at the rector of Pendell.

"You would have *him* your dupe also I see," uttered Mr. Morton hastily. "There," said he throwing her a small silver piece, don't fail this time—perhaps you can do better at fortune telling."

Zingari took no notice of the money, but asked him what he particularly wanted to know.

"Well, you have predicted the death of his lordship—a shrewd guess by the by, seeing that we are not all immortal like yourself—but after that what is to happen?"

"Oh, his lordship's great funeral, of course," replied Zingari.

"Capital!" said Mr. Morton affecting to laugh, "capital guessing, as bishops are always certain to have great funerals. What a wonderful seeress to predict what she knows is going to happen."

"Just as your greatest so-called prophets have always done," she retorted.

"Ay, woman, but after all they gave us some shrewd particulars; try your hand in that line; say, for instance, who are to be the pall bearers?"

"You will not be one," she quickly replied.

"Well, shall I not be among the mourners?"

"No," said she, "not unless you yourself rise from the grave, which is scarcely probable."

The Rev. Mr. Morton tried to laugh at this capital joke, but somehow the laugh stuck in his throat, yet he continued, as if unabashed:

"O, of course you always like to bury those who are not your dupes. Well, won't you promise me a stately funeral?"

"No, not even the burial of a pauper, for you will never need a coffin."

At this the rector of Pendell, in spite of his affected indifference, was really startled.

"Here, you old Jezebel!" now shouted the Rev. Mr. Rockett, "you have quickly disposed of one bishop and one rector; save your favors for others; there are three or four more of us here, yet. I suppose I shall die also—what then? Don't hurry me off too soon."

"Ah, you think that would be a safe prediction for me," said Zingari. "Well, we will not hurry you off, you will survive the other two, but die you must; aye, unexpectedly before your time."

"Well, but you will bury me decently, won't you?" inquired he in a mocking tone.

"Bury you? ah me, no! You will have no coffin, you will have no funeral—for you will never need even a grave."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ISLAND OF SAINTS.

AS soon as John Valiant had made arrangements for the restoration of the old Manor House, for the improvement of the land and cottages on the Heath, and for the present employment and benefit of the poor inhabitants on that portion of his estate, he resumed his search after his son; and he landed in Ireland during the first day of July determined to make a thorough search in that country in the hope of being able to return either accompanied by the object of his solicitude or possessed of some certain knowledge concerning him. During the few months of his stay in England, he had made inquiries not only at the several Mission Houses, but in many other places, and he had also employed trusty agents to try and gain such information as might be most likely to render his journey successful. Any way, though still much depressed the news he had obtained through certain sources, enabled him to start afresh more hopeful than he had been for many a day.

Were a person desirous of tracing out on a map of the world, a land that had been devastated by religious strife, and still cursed by the demon of religious discord, he might look through Asia, that primitive source of religious ideas, he might enter India and course along the Indus, or the Ganges, and thence through China and Japan, and find men worshipping at different altars, or bowing before different shrines, and yet not be inclined to

hate or harass one another because that Brahma, or Buddha, or Christna, or some other deity, was the object of adoration. He would find that the maxims of Confucius inculcated a reverence for the religious opinions of strangers;* and that even in Africa, where it is said the greatest superstition still abounds, not one of the ancient temples or vast structures which stud the course of the Nile, and indicate the past greatness of Egypt, was ever erected to serve as an Inquisition. In these so-called benighted lands where the great majority of mankind—the still unchristianized—are huddled together, or classified into castes, the powerful and prevailing influence of Paganism has ever been averse to religious persecution; and not until the inquirer has passed into Europe, not until he has entered the very stronghold of that superior Faith for which is claimed every excellence, not until he has reached lands eminently Christian, can he truly discover the terrible effects of bigotry and religious persecution.

Strange that this should be the case, but history will not belie the assertion. Look at the map. Oh! what a contrast between Pagan Rome in the Augustan age, and papal Rome under a Gregory, an Alexander, or an Innocent! See Spain, almost wholly devoted to the Roman Catholic Church, degraded by its intolerance, and its Inquisition; and the government miserably enfeebled by the dictation of priests. Portugal is much in the same condition. France has been rendered restless and revolutionary, as much perhaps by its bigoted, intermeddling ecclesiastics, as by its intriguing rulers, or its insignificant

* "Among the Chinese it is customary to ask, 'To what sublime religion do you belong?' One perhaps will call himself a Confucianist, another a Boodhist, a third a disciple of Lao-tze, a fourth a follower of Mohammed, of whom there are many in China, and then every one begins to pronounce a panegyric on the religion to which he does not belong, as politeness requires; after which they all repeat in chorus, '*Pow-town-Kiao, town-ty*, religions are many; reason is one; we are all brothers.' This phrase is on the lips of every Chinese, and they bandy it from one to the other with the most exquisite urbanity,"—Huc's Journey through the Chinese empire, Cap. V.

minority of Huguenots. Austria, and Italy, have just begun to see that the antiquated notion of a one true church has left them far behind in the march of improvement; and that toleration is at last necessary. If this idea of a "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one true church" so steadfastly adhered to in countries exclusively Roman Catholic, has produced such degeneration, how is it in a country where Protestants and Catholics, come into dread conflict; where a so-called heretical faith has been urged on the majority, where wrangling Protestant sects only truly unite in hostility to the papal Church and where added to this hostility political and national wrongs tend to aggravate and perpetuate the hatred that has already existed for centuries? Now where in a map of this wide world can a land be found so cursed and blighted?

There is a beautiful island in the Atlantic, long renowned for its majestic mountains, its lovely valleys, its romantic glens, its splendid lakes, its pleasant rivers, and its clear streams. A fair island, as if nature had been determined to exhibit an epitome of its richness and beauty, a green spot raised in the midst of the blue waves, with glorious scenery, fertile soil, and a healthful climate; with verdant slopes, with rocks, roses, and waterfalls, and every attraction to make it an earthly paradise; and yet this very island richly endowed as it is by the great munificent Hand, has been made nearly desolate by man; and religious and political strife has swept through it, and over it like a very besom of destruction. This island so beautiful, so blighted, and so bereft; this land, such a reproach to its Popes, and potentates, this arena of fearful pious and political discord, can alas! be traced out on the map as—Ireland.

This then was the country to which John Valiant had determined to proceed. He landed in Dublin and remained in the city for a day or two with an old friend whom he had known in India. This person who was in an official position in the Irish capital gave him much information as to the condition of the country, the habits of the people,

and what were thought to be the main causes of the continued discontent of the great majority of the inhabitants. Ireland was still very much disturbed; the chronic state of rebellion in which it had been for centuries, still required the presence of a large number of troops, and these, with priests, parsons, and policemen, and numerous ragged, hungry looking creatures wandering through the streets were the most common and striking objects that met the eye of a stranger. How different from what one should expect! Here was a land which might be the happy home of millions, but from which thousands annually rush as if from a plague stricken country—it is a stricken country—it has been blighted by sectarian strife; and in every phase of misfortune that has befallen this unhappy island, religious plotting, and religious discord can be traced as the root of the evil. Here for a long period was a pampered State Church—now happily disestablished—representing but a fraction of the population, yet reveling in wealth and pretension; which for long years, and in its palmiest days, was rapacious enough to exact tithes from the great bulk of the inhabitants who were of a hostile belief—the Roman Catholic majority, then, and still, the most destitute class of Irish—and on whom it tried, often by the vilest means, to force a detested creed, a church which would still continue to exact the last penny from the very people who hated its doctrines, were it not for the cry of, “shame, shame,” which startled at last even an indolent majority in the British Parliament to a sense of simple justice. And then, when this very church was deprived of this infamous right to directly assess Irish Roman Catholics, (as it has assessed Irish and English Dissenters,) as a proof of its reliance on Providence, its pusillanimous moanings—such as it lately gave upon its disestablishment in Ireland—were heard throughout the land, as if it had been forsaken by God and man.

But though the Catholics had declaimed long and loud to a Protestant clergy against the oppression of tithes one might assert that this affliction was but retributive; for

their own Church claimed tithes, without remorse, in every country over which it had control; and Pope Innocent III. was among the first to establish this odious Jewish tax on all alike in England; and his decretal was, of course, equally authoritative in Ireland. The English State Church, however, such as it was, and such as it is, was but a partial evil in the land. The Roman Catholics had, and still have, a much more oppressive burden in the support of the ostentatious form of faith to which they are so devotedly attached. If Ireland has not been the actual flower garden of the Roman Church, it has certainly been its kitchen garden, and while the numerous hierarchs of the Popedom have flourished and fattened among an impoverished people, they have made those same people—the Roman Catholic Irish—their veriest slaves. The Irish Catholic bishops, though ever ready to talk in lofty strains about patriotism, have never yet been too faithful to their own country. They declaim against England, yet are willing to accept her gold and her favors, as if their rights; they are willing that the Irish race should remain moderately turbulent—a thorn in the forefinger of Britain; they are willing to denounce “Saxon” schools, and “Saxon” innovations, and “Saxon” civilization, but yet would be among the first to prevent the people, whom they had gradually trained to believe, that resistance to tyrants was a duty, from the commission of an overt act, though that very act should secure for all their fancied political liberty. Rome has ever been almost idolized by the Irish priesthood; and Rome, the fanatic, that would prevent a Protestant Bible, a Protestant church, or even a Protestant cemetery from being within its holy boundaries,* is exalted as the model of truth and propriety for all nations; and though those same Irish bishops well know that the submission of their country to England is the result of the machinations of a veritable Pope, (Adrian IV.,) still, as if oblivious of this fact, the whole

* See Note 8.

fearful story is not told, but the entire blame is placed on others, or thrown upon the shoulders of the hated Saxon.

Alas for this poor island! the rule of priests has secured for it an unhappy notoriety; and traces of their degenerating sway can be seen in the faces of too many of its people. After centuries of ecclesiastical domination, ignorance and superstition prevail; the Irish are no longer the teachers, the poets and the musicians of Europe; their bards are all but forgotten, and their harp almost silent. O! what have hostile creeds and blind faiths done for Ireland? What have mitres, and crosiers, and spangles, and lawn, and consecrated gew-gaws and trumpery, Catholic and Protestant, wrought for this creed-cursed country?

Such were the ideas that prevailed in the mind of John Valiant respecting Ireland; he could form no other conclusion than that this land of which he had heard so much, had been deplorably misgoverned for centuries; and that, though the government had of late years, been honestly trying to better the condition of the country, almost every effort in this direction had been interfered with by the clergy, principally by those of Rome. The recital of the political sufferings of Ireland must still go on; every wound must be made to bleed afresh, and the persecuted Church of his Holiness must be exalted as the greatest of martyrs, as if the persecutions of heresy were not vastly more cruel and extensive than all others. No, nothing should be forgotten by Catholic priests; the past should never die—they would never see a single hope; but while England ruled, the bleak future was to be ushered in, surrounded by the blackest thunder clouds, as if ominous of continued disasters for their unhappy island.

As it was, Mr. Valiant found that the people were divided into sects and parties too prejudiced to reason, and too much under the subjection of priestly rulers, to dare think for themselves; and, from what he saw, he could not help believing that if it had been the policy of those in authority, civil and religious, to create disunion and to engender strife among a naturally kind and generous peo-

ple, they had only been too successful. He found that after prayers and penalties, after blessings and excommunications, after a lavish distribution of "Acts and Epistles," and acts of Parliament, that Ireland was still volcanic, still ejecting its destructive lava, flinging its burning scoria far and near, and often rendering even noon-day dismal with its smoke, its ashes, and its deadly vapors.

It was a gala day in Belfast, a great number of people had assembled in the city; flags were suspended in different places; several vessels at the quays had hoisted an unusual quantity of bunting, and gaudy banners floated in the genial air over certain buildings, and a few hung gently ruffled even from some of the highest steeples. Shouting boys displaying blue and yellow ribbons tramped here and there through the streets; and men, women, and children wandered about as if bent upon exhibiting ribbons of the same kind tied around, or fastened to hats, caps, and bonnets. Even most of the sedate, respectable business men as they went along wore a little of this yellow or blue ribbon in a button hole, and the yellow, or rather the orange color, seemed on this particular day to be so prized by all, that few persons could be seen who had not from a finger's length to a yard or two of this kind of ribbon fastened to coat or hat, as if it were a token of some distinction. On ordinary occasions the chief town of Protestant Ulster might be a model of sobriety and quietness, but on this day, although it was yet the early forenoon, a more rampant, noisy number of people could hardly be got together; and it is questionable whether strict sobriety could have engendered the wanton enthusiasm which appeared to control nearly all. Many seemed to act as if there had been granted a special license to be as boisterous and as unruly as possible; and many others went strutting about with defiant look and rude bearing, as if anxious to discover an opponent on whom to exhibit appropriate vengeance. To make things more confused, other noises besides loud shouting were almost continuous. Shots were heard within the respectable

corporation boundaries of the city; fire crackers rattled on the streets, and on house tops; the constant rat-a-tat-tat of little drums was deafning, and that which was required to complete the most bewildering disorder was produced by shrieking fifes, whistles, and tin trumpets, blown in every direction by boys whose puffed cheeks gave evidence of a determination to make the most ear-piercing sounds from the most insignificant of instruments.

A short time before mid-day the Dublin train reached the Belfast station; there were many passengers, several of whom rejoiced not only in a profusion of blue and yellow ribbons, but who also wore peculiar shaped orange collars, and a few men wore a kind of red gown which gave them a most absurd and slovenly appearance. One individual, apparently some kind of a leader or official, besides wearing ribbons, a collar, and a rich scarf, had also two or three medals fastened on his breast. He was a stout, low-sized man, with a short neck, a florid face, and something of the vulgar bully in his appearance. Indeed at first view, one even reasonably skilled in physiognomy might wonder how such a man could do any act that would entitle him to wear any medal other than one of the most poisonous brass; but like other (so-called heroes) he might have won them because he was a partizan who could be reckless and inhuman against political or religious opponents. He had evidently been expected, for when the cars stopped, a crowd of men variously bedizened awaited his arrival, and when he stepped from the car a loud shout rent the air, irregular shots were fired, little drums rattled, flags were waved about in the wildest manner, and two or three bands struck up a medley of tunes, producing a *pot pourri* which to a musical ear was simply distracting.

After a little delay this distinguished visitor, who proved to be a "deputy grand" something among the Irish Orangemen, entered a carriage with three other persons, a long procession was formed, the bands struck up again, banners were again waved, and the cortege moved off from

the station. This was the great 12th of July, a day more sacred to many Orangemen than our Christmas is to Christians. The anniversary of the battle of the Boyne was again to be celebrated. King William on horseback—the Orange idol—was once more to be flaunted before the eyes of the incensed Catholics; an old feud was to be offensively brought to remembrance, aided even by some who claimed to be distinguished as ministers of a religion of peace; and Protestantism here was again about to raise its triumphant head in proud disdain for Pope and popery, ready to pray for the conversion of the dupes of that system, or perhaps more ready to consign them to infamy; willing that the country should be purged of their presence, and that Providence might be further honored and glorified, in their complete banishment or annihilation.

Mr. Valiant who had arrived at Belfast by the same train, was rather surprised at this singular demonstration. He waited quietly at the station until nearly all had departed; and, as every vehicle in waiting had rolled away hurriedly filled, he threw his light overcoat across his arm, and carrying a small valise, took his way leisurely towards the principal hotel. As he went along he discovered that, for some reason, he was the object of much questionable attention, and that notwithstanding the clatter and the rush of people that had taken place in their desire to keep near the principal carriage, many persons stood and stared at him as if he had been an unbaptized native of the Sandwich Islands. Little Protestant boys—for they wore the Orange ribbon—were so rude as to yell after him as he walked on, and five or six of them followed him closely, sometimes rushing in front of him to make grimaces, while one or another of their number would be violently pushed against him; others who stood behind kept shouting, “papist! papist! papist!” and some actually flung mud and stones at him, with the most lawless intentions.

Amazed at such conduct, and really astonished that no one interfered to save a stranger from insult, John Valiant

quicken^{ed} his pace, and had just turned the corner of a street when he came face to face with two very drunken men who stood in front of a kind of low tavern. The men wore orange collars, and had a profusion of blue and yellow ribbons, and as soon as they perceived the strange person before them, for some imaginable cause, they rushed forward as if to lay hold of him. By a dexterous movement, however, he just escaped their clutches, and as he passed quickly beyond their reach, they seemed to grow furious and between the stormy oaths and imprecations which they roared in anger, the Orangemen's blessing, "To hell with the Pope," could be distinctly heard until he turned down another street and disappeared. Under the impression that many of the inhabitants of this northern Christian city were more savage and uncivilized than any of the wildest heathens he had ever met in foreign lands, he began to feel anxious to get to the hotel. Not a policeman was in view, even the few he had seen about the railroad station must have been partisans, for they too exhibited a portion of the orange in a button-hole. If he asked a question no one would give him a civil reply; even the very women either laughed at his apparent discomfiture, or scowled at his presence.

He made some inquiries as to his way to a certain part of the city, but he must have been wilfully misdirected, for he soon found himself wandering through the most filthy streets, where every second or third house seemed to be a wretched kind of groggery or beer shop; and in these squalid retreats numbers of people had assembled. Their beverage must, of course, have had its due effect, for already several were singing, and bawling, and toasting with screaming voice, "The glorious pious and immortal memory." Even here the Orange flags and streamers were again conspicuous, and maudlin men with glazed eye and clammy lip, reeled along the highways singing snatches of the "Boyne Water," and "Croppies Lie Down," and halting occasionally to look around and defiantly shout, "To hell with the Pope."

As it was, Mr. Valiant felt somewhat uneasy. There he was apparently in the most disreputable part of a strange town, among a drunken, ruffianly set who were ready to insult, or to lay violent hands on him without the least provocation. But this was his mistake; he had unwittingly giving offence; he had without his knowledge exasperated some reckless, excitable men; and just as a bull might be made furious by the sight of a red shawl, the mere sight of the light *green* silk vest, which he, John Valiant, as a free-born Briton, wore on his arrival in this good Protestant city, and which so raised the ire of certain of its pious and loyal inhabitants, had nearly cost him his life; for the six or eight villainous fellows who now surrounded him, would not have hesitated to commit any atrocity on the person of a defiant papist—for such they took him to be—were it not for the prompt interference of a gang of Catholic workmen, and common laborers who just happened to pass at the time. They understood the difficulty at once. The same green vest was the talisman which awoke their sympathies, and aroused them to action; a fight quickly ensued, blows came fast and heavy, there was a renewal of furious strife between the Orange and the Green. The Pope was again sent to hell—King William was again lustily damned; and Luther and Calvin, and John Knox, consigned again to the bottomless pit. During the melee, John Valiant, who had already knocked down more than one of the aggressors, and who was quite willing to stand by his new friends, was forced away from the spot by some of his ardent admirers. They looked upon him as being a brave champion who was not afraid to display the Green even in the midst of a vile Orange faction, and as they wished to see him safe they conducted him to one of the principal streets. His liberal reward was promptly refused; and with hearty repetitions of “God bless your honor,” resounded in his ears, he hurried on, and without broken bones, or further molestation, soon arrived at his desired quarters.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHRISTIAN HARMONY.

THE hotel in which Mr. Valiant found refuge, was, perhaps the principal one in the city, and, for that day at least, seemed to be the headquarters of the Belfast Orangemen, as well as for the crowd of that fraternity which attended from a distance. A great Orange flag waved from the cupola of the building; a similar banner was hung over the principal entrance; and sundry other flags and streamers, decorated windows, and fluttered from conspicuous points of this particular rendezvous. Several lodges of the brethren stood in waiting along the street, and a great number of people had assembled to witness another annual display of ostentatious loyalty.

On his way to the hotel, Mr. Valiant had to pass through nearly this entire assemblage, and though he was again stared at by many, and heard muttered remarks about his "wearing of the green," yet those hereabout were sufficiently discreet to refrain from coarse language, and so far orderly enough as to offer no offense. Besides, the very fact of his having, as a traveler, chosen this resort, satisfied many, that though he had, no doubt, thoughtlessly ventured to wear on this great day a disloyal color, he would have never approached such a place unless he was "all right."

When he entered the hotel, he found it well filled; several of the principal magnates of "the order" had called to pay their respects to the "Deputy Grand" wor-

thy, who had been his fellow-passenger on the train from Dublin. This individual was in one of the largest front rooms, holding a kind of levee. There was nothing very dignified in the proceeding, for all seemed to be hilarious; and while these happy fellows were making arrangements for the grand procession, which was about to take place, Mr. Valiant hastened to change his vest; for, from what he had heard, and from what had happened, he now began to have a strong suspicion that he was indebted to the color of that article of his apparel for the singular attention which had already been paid to him since his arrival in Belfast.

It had been arranged that the procession should start by noon from this temporary headquarters, but one thing or another caused delay, and it was over an hour before everything was in readiness. By that time, a great many people were standing at street corners, and crowds lined the principal thoroughfares along which the procession was expected to pass. Spectators could be seen at every window; and boys who had climbed lamp posts, stood watching and waiting upon these, and upon any other accessible elevation that might give them a chance to see what was going on.

Besides the many eager sight-seers, soldiers could be seen drawn up in certain localities, and an extra force of policemen, distributed here and there, was ready for any emergency. It had also been rumored that a great body of Catholics had determined to oppose the offensive display. Orangemen had been riotous and violent, and had interrupted the late Catholic celebration of St. Patrick's day. The annual recurrence of Orange demonstrations was felt by the Catholics of Ireland to be not only uncalled for, but a sore cause of irritation—more like a studied insult than a desire simply to perpetuate the “glorious, pious and immortal memory” of King William, and which insult, if the Government could not prevent it, must be resented at any cost. As it was, many sensible, well-meaning persons, Protestant and Catholic, were fully

satisfied that, no matter what necessity might have called Orangeism into existence, there was not the least requirement for its continuation—none any way for its offensive public displays; that if it were even a protective association, it was now, in fact and spirit aggressive and unruly; and, from a common sense point of view, must be adjudged a wanton grievance. As a secret society, it had done no good; and as most secret societies have a tendency to make weak minds enraptured with silly mysteries, to make men exclusive, and to circumscribe generous impulses, the Orange association in particular had been noted for its creation of furious partisans, many of whom can be almost totally blind to the claims of reason and justice, when called upon to decide in the interest of a "brother," or in that of the so-called "loyal organization."

Nearly a century ago, when rude Protestant mobs, called "Peep-o-day Boys," used to assemble at the early dawn for the purpose of committing agrarian and other outrages upon as rude a mob called "White Boys," as well as upon other Catholics who were united in opposition to the payment of tithes; when Catholics in turn united and were known as "Defenders," subsequently as "Ribbon-men," and retaliated on Protestants, when collisions and butcheries were of daily, or rather of nightly occurrence, the whole country, especially in the north, was the scene of violence and ruffianism scarcely ever exceeded. About the time when it was felt that the penal laws, long strictly enforced against "papists" had been greatly relaxed; and when it was found that the Irish Catholics had become generally more disaffected toward English rule, it was thought important to make the union of Protestants more influential. Most of the "Peep-o-day Boys" were as low and as brutal in their instincts as it was possible for any of the "White Boys," or the "Defenders," to be, and very few beyond this class of Protestant protectors cared to be connected with such a body as these "Peepers." However, after some cogitation and planning, certain men of respectability and position, including Protestant minis-

ters, were secured, and the first Orange Lodge was founded in the village of Loughall, in the county of Armagh, on the 21st of September, 1795. The name of Orangeism was chosen in honor of William III., Prince of Orange, and it was not long before the association had branches in every part of the Kingdom; it was even acknowledged by Royalty, for the Duke of Cumberland became the Grand Master for England in 1827.

Previous to this time it had crept into the army, several regiments having had warrants for holding lodges; and it infested British society, not only in the United Kingdom, but in many of the British colonies.

At first Orangeism was said to represent a defensive association, such it might have done, but what has it since become? Though many worthy, well-meaning persons have been induced to enroll themselves under its banners, many others upon closer acquaintance, have readily withdrawn. The Orange organization has not entirely proved itself to be a fraternity to secure religious liberty, and to check lawless intolerance; it has itself too often become lawless, intolerant, and overbearing, it has not been a union of the most intelligent, the most orderly, or the most peaceable, but frequently the refuge of too many of the very opposite character; too often a mere political stepping-stone for a class of men who could never obtain either office, or authority, or worthy distinction of any kind, outside of this peculiar association; and who are at times inconsistent enough to denounce the Pope or to serve his cause, just as the policy of political leaders may require, for, at the present day, it may be fairly asserted that Orangeism is as much a political as a religious organization.

An impartial writer in an article on Orangeism says: "The worst result of the Orange association was the constant incentive which it supplied to party animosities and deeds of violence. In the north of Ireland the party displays and processions were a perpetually recurring source of disorder, and even of bloodshed, and the spirit of fra-

ternity which pervaded its members was a standing obstacle to the administration of the law. It was known or believed that an Orange culprit was perfectly safe in the hands of an Orange jury; and all confidence in the local administration of justice by magistrates was destroyed. These facts, as well as an allegation which was publicly made, of the existence of a conspiracy to alter the succession of the crown in favor of the Duke of Cumberland, led to a protracted parliamentary inquiry, as well as a very shocking outrage perpetrated soon afterward by an armed body of Orangemen on occasion of a procession in Ireland tended so much to discredit the association, and to awaken the public mind to a sense of the folly and wickedness of such associations, that its respectability has since that time gradually diminished. So great was the popular distrust of the administration of justice in party questions, that for several years the Lord Chancellor laid down a rule, by which no member of the Orange association was admitted to the commission of the peace; and although the association still exists, it is comparatively without influence, except among the very lowest classes in the north of Ireland. Of the colonial offshoots of the Orange association, those of Canada have at all times been the most active and the most flourishing. The Canadian Orangemen being for the most part Irish emigrants, carried with them all the bitterness of the domestic feud with Roman Catholics. Outrages directed against Catholic churches, convents, and other institutions were of not unfrequent occurrence until recently; and on occasion of the late visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada, an attempt was made to force from His Royal Highness a recognition of the association, which was only defeated by his own firmness and by the judicious and moderate counsels of his advisers." *

Notwithstanding all this, those who in a manner exist by Orangeism have agitated for a repeal of all prohibitory laws against Orange processions; and the Orange society

* See Chamber's Enc. Art. Orangeism.

would fain appear as persecuted virtue evoking sympathy; and notwithstanding the pleas and the pretensions of this vaunting association, many of its leaders, and many of its members, have proved recreant to their loudly avowed principles; there seems to be a leaven of Jesuitism even in this society; for Orange members of Parliament, especially in Canada, have been known to readily vote for munificent grants to Catholic theological institutions, and very few have proved more servile to Catholic Church dignitaries than Orange politicians anxious for political support, and Orange statesmen eagerly desirous of retaining power.

When it became known that the Catholics had determined to oppose the procession, or attack the "loyal body," the wildest shouts were heard in various quarters; many were delighted at the bare idea of having a chance to cut down a "damned papist;" and certain mounted officials, with streaming ribbons, galloped furiously about, frantically brandishing a sword or other weapon, as if the whole "glorious cause" just then and there depended on the quantity of bluster or perspiration that might escape them. At the time there appeared to be much confusion, and together with shouts, and oaths and screams, there was a great waving of flags and pounding of big drums. Frightened women were hurrying off, many of them urging crying children to greater speed. Shopkeepers could be seen hastily putting up shutters and closing their places of business; apple women and other petty dealers, were making off with their stands, and several persons were fastening down windows, and taking such other hurried precautions for safety as were thought necessary.

Shots and shouts, the beating of big drums, and the rattle of little drums, and the wild medley of party tunes, were again heard; and the din and discord were most bewildering. Lodge after lodge fell in; a great line was formed, and after more needless galloping and cantering about, the procession at last started. Somewhat in ad-

vance, the "Deputy Grand," mounted on a grey horse, rode with affected stately bearing; men at arms, and high Orange officials on either side, made, as it were, vigorous exertions to curb their restless, prancing steeds, and as the sun shone down on swords and spears, and upon red cloaks, red flags, and orange flags; upon yellow and blue ribbons, and upon the varied tinsel and rude decorations of this motley assemblage, the whole appeared to be more like a vast gathering of harlequins, than an organized fraternity intent on mischief.

Mr. Valiant from his seat at an upper window of the hotel had seen the preparatory arrangements for the procession, and, having waited until it moved away, and had time to pass through some of the principal streets, was about to follow and see something of the display, in order to be able to judge as to the effect of such an exhibition upon a population so divided in theological belief. He was not at the time aware that there was to be any hostile Catholic demonstration; this, though known to many others had not reached him, and he had attributed the wild shouts, that had rent the air to a feeling of Orange exuberance. Now, however, just as he was about to start from the place, he was surprised to see a wild mob of men, who were yelling like fiends, rush up in front of the hotel. As their sudden appearance and savage aspect boded no good, he quickly re-entered the house, and went up again to the room which he had just left. The landlord was a picture of consternation; he seemed to know at a glance with whom he had to deal. Many of the servants were terror stricken, most of them left the house and ran off to places of security. There was no time lost by the new comers; several of the mob rushed into the house like furies, smashing windows, and furniture, and any thing they could lay hands on; others tore down the large Orange flag that hung over the doorway, and the banner, which but a few minutes previously had waved proudly from the cupola, was now, like the other flag, lying in the dusty street, torn into shreds, while a hundred yelling

men, and even some wild looking women, were trampling it into the ground, befouling every thread of the orange silk, damning King William, and swearing loud vengeance against all connected with the "infernial rabble of Orangemen."

No one could be more helpless than the landlord of the hotel in this extremity; he had been left almost entirely deserted; a few of his servants who had remained with him had been violently assaulted and had to flee for their lives. He saw some of the infuriated men make preparation to set fire to the place, and as he was well-known for his Orange proclivities, he dared not approach to plead or to remonstrate; for he well knew that his life would then be held but of little account. None in the neighborhood dared come to his assistance, and he expected to witness nothing but complete disaster. While in this dilemma he was noticed by some who were demolishing his property. A cry was raised, and nearly a score of savage men chased him along halls and corridors, and just as he was ready to fall into their hands weak and panting, a door was suddenly opened by a gentleman; the landlord rushed into the room and locked the door; the gentleman heroically remained on the outside, and the savage pursuers were suddenly stayed in their course by the resolute appearance and attitude of John Valiant.

After a few moments hesitation, one fellow made an attempt to advance, and cried out: "Stand aside and let us in!"

"If you follow that man, you do so at your own peril; I'll not let one of you pass in here if I can prevent it," said Mr. Valiant in a determined tone.

"Stand aside, I tell you. We must tear that damned Orangeman to pieces," and the man made another attempt to get to the door.

"If you approach one step further you will force me to use this, and I shall do it. Don't come nearer." John Valiant had somehow got possession of the short thick end of a broken flag-pole; it was a piece of ash, and would

have been a terrible weapon in the hands of him who then grasped it.

The men instinctively judging that they had an unflinching person to deal with, again hesitated, and, in their disappointment they now became abusive.

"You're another of the infernal crew; if you don't get out of our way we'll soon find something, and hack you to pieces."

"I'm no Orangeman," replied John Valiant, "but you are cowards to come here twenty to one after a single man. Don't approach, I tell you; another step and I strike," and now the heavy stick was raised and a furious and perhaps fatal blow would have been given, if the fellow who tried to advance had not quickly retreated.

"You are one of the vile tribe—we'll send you to hell; but that's too good for you," now shouted another. "You've got the cursed colors next your heart—it ought to be torn out and stuffed in your own mouth." While saying this the man pointed scornfully to Mr. Valiant's breast.

In changing part of his apparel after his late misadventure upon his arrival in the city, Mr. Valiant had thoughtlessly replaced the light green silk vest which had given such offence, with one of a blue color, and though the shade was rather deep, it only made the small silken orange sprigs scattered over it more conspicuous. Even then, after this fresh reviling, it did not occur to him that he was wearing any color which could possibly give offence.

It is probable that the evil disposed men who were then held aloof, would have soon overcome all opposition, and have burst into the room, but just then a number of soldiers and constables made their appearance. A few of the lawless men who had entered the house were arrested, the others had made their escape.

Before the arrival of this fortunate succor, the landlord had jumped down from a back window to a balcony, and thence to a lane, from which he made off from his enemies. Soon afterward, when he could venture to re-

turn to the house with servants and assistants, Mr. Valiant took his way through the city, desirous of finding out the perambulating lodges.

While on their course through the streets, the report came to the ears of some of the Orange leaders, that their late headquarters had been nearly demolished. A sufficient number of men were at once detached and sent back to defend the place; soldiers and policemen had also received orders to hurry forward. In the absence of certain Orange bodies, a simultaneous attack had been made on their lodge rooms, and a great deal of property was destroyed. The houses of many of the most prominent Orangemen in the city had been ransacked, and individual Orangemen, and certain other Protestants, had been hunted and waylaid here and there, and badly beaten. Much injury had been done; but as the Catholics had so far refrained from making a direct attack on the procession, the incensed Orangemen were perplexed and burning for revenge; and as they could not at once lay violent hands on the "damned papists," they could any way visit their accursed mass houses and scatter their crosses and their idols to the wind, and pitch their holy water into the nearest puddle.

With such intent, over a thousand Orangemen had orders to move forward. The "Deputy-Grand" and his mounted companions, were determined, somehow, to teach the papists another lesson that should be remembered. Moving on them at a quick pace, it was not long before they drew up before a large Catholic chapel, with intent, it might be, to demolish it forthwith—at least such was the desire of a great majority of those present. However, before these Christian iconoclasts commenced their exemplary work, a fanatical chaplain, who wore a white gown, and who, while holding a Bible in one hand, clutched a sword in the other, proposed that all present, who had never bent the knee to Baal, should first ask the blessing of God on their "endeavors to serve His holy cause, the cause of civil and religious freedom, the cause of our

glorious Constitution—the grand Orange cause.” Here there was loud cheering, and while the pious chaplain was making shuffling endeavors to mount a cart for the purpose of being sufficiently elevated to offer up a prayer, the “Deputy-Grand” and several of his magnates galloped up and interfered for the time with the devout proposal.

This great official having intimated his desire to address the brethren, a vast circle was soon formed, he and his companions rode to the centre, and with lusty voice he then and there spoke out to those assembled:

“Orangemen—loyal brothers—upholders of the cause of civil and religious liberty, (great cheers,) surrounded, as I am, by your impenetrable ranks, I feel that our holy and glorious Protestant principles are safe (cheers), and that could the sneaking Vicegerant of the devil, who now hides his diminished head under the shadow of the seven Roman hills; (cheers) could that propounder of blasphemous infallibility, with his triple crown, and dead men’s bones, see your proud faces on this auspicious day (cheers), he would tremble again on his tottering throne in the sublime presence of Orange freemen (terrific huzzas). But, brethren, much as we have done and suffered for our glorious principles, how have we been treated by a dastard Government, that would dare to circumscribe Orange liberty? (Hisses.) Here we are, face to face with benighted papists—far worse than the veriest infidels—papists, who have been pampered to audacity, and while trying to control and enlighten those serfs of Popery, we have, even on this very day, been made to suffer loss and injury for our moderation (yells); and many of us have become martyrs in the cause of truth and loyalty (renewed yells). Shall we, sons of noble sires, submit without resistance to papist insults? (Never, never!) Servile statesmen now in power, have tried to denounce our principles, and to reduce us to the degraded level of Romanists. But hear me, brethren: by all the powers eternal, this shall never be. (Great cheers.) We feel that we can be independent of rotten statesmen; we feel, and we know,

that we can have powerful aids; for the Lord God, even the God of Israel, is on our side. (Immense cheering.)

See here, valiant brothers, I have on my Orange scarf (cheers) because I am the Deputy-Grand Master of the Orange Association of England (cheers), and because it represents a good principle. It represents civil and religious liberty. (Loud cheers.) It represents an open Bible. (Cheers.) It represents the preaching of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. O brethren, shall I tell you something? (Hear, hear, cries of "yes.") Two or three years ago, I sent to the New York State fifty Orange warrants, and you will find in their lodge rooms—you will find fifty papers signed with the name of ——. (Cheers.) We have 300,000 armed Orangemen in Canada; we have 250,000 in Ireland (cheers), and there is not one of the Queen's ships that sails out of Portsmouth, that does not contain a band of Orangemen. (Cheers.) What then can we fear from Gladstone, that infernal Jesuit? (Loud cheers and laughter.) I defy thee, (cheer) oh Pope of Rome, thou unconfined fiend of hell, the Lord God shall shortly consume thee. (Cheers and laughter.) O House of Lords—must I say it—I will say it, (laughter,) thou shalt perish. (Laughter.) Shall I say something more? I will say it. O Prince of Wales, thou wilt never be king of England." (Laughter and confusion.)*

A short time before the conclusion of this address several excited and uncontrollable Orangemen had attacked bystanders whom they took to be papists, others had placed ladders against the gothic windows of the Catholic church for the purpose of entering the building by that means; and while others were trying to force in the large church door, about twenty scattering shots were fired, and a shower of stones followed from behind a low wall which

* That part of the above speech after the words "see here, valiant brothers," is, according to a Belfast newspaper, the actual *rodomontade* uttered at the annual meeting of the Stalybridge Constitutional Association, in October, 1872, by a Deputy Grand Master of the Orange Association, in seconding a vote of thanks to the Mayor.

enclosed a kind of yard at the back of that edifice. Before the smoke cleared away cries were heard; three men lay on the ground, and five or six others who had been wounded were seen limping away, or led off by friends. Hundreds of the Orangemen now lost all control, and rage and wild excitement seemed to predominate. Nearly a hundred men speedily rushed over the low wall, and the work of havoc commenced. The first man wearing an orange sash who got into the yard fell in a minute dead to the earth; and a stout man with a green scarf, who had struck the mortal blow, now lay by his side desperately wounded. In less than five minutes seven more Orangemen, and thirteen Catholics, lay around in the yard, dead and dying, and many others on both sides were severely wounded. A company of soldiers now rushed forward, cleared the place and took several prisoners. Before the soldiers came many of the Orangemen who had been trying to get into the building through the windows, had been hurled down from the ladders and were badly injured. Still indifferent to the presence of soldiers or of constables the Orangemen in overwhelming numbers continued their assault on the church. Stones flew thick and fast, and every pane of glass, every window, and every door was quickly smashed or broken.

Just at this time John Valiant had a narrow escape. He had overtaken the Orange procession as the "Deputy Grand" had commenced his address to his brethren, and he was a witness of all that had subsequently occurred. Previously, while in the streets among the people, he did his best to allay bad feelings, and after the shots had been fired he, at his own risk, assisted many of the wounded; and he restrained a few others from the commission of bloody deeds. Some time after the arrival of the soldiers he by some means got into the church. He had been greatly heated and fatigued by his exertions to serve others, and as he sat in a retired spot wiping his face with one of the yellow silk handkerchiefs which he had brought from India, about a dozen excited Catholics, who were

then rushing through the stormed edifice, mistook him for an Orangeman, and dashed at him with all the fury of savages. In another moment he might have been fatally injured were it not for the foremost man who suddenly stopped and spread out his arms as if to keep the others back.

"Good God! what are you? Did I not meet you this morning when you were waylaid by Orangemen? What are you? Who are you?"

"Yes, you met me this morning," said Mr. Valiant, now recognizing his interrogator, "and I don't forget you; I shall, I hope, have to thank you now for another rescue."

"But what are you?" said the man again, and he looked with flashing eyes at the yellow handkerchief.

Mr. Valiant now seemed to understand all, and replied: "I am nothing in this place—nothing but what I was this morning—neither Orange nor Green, but a stranger in this city, even now anxious to get away—never to see it again."

"I believe you speak the truth," said the man who had been looking searchingly into his eyes, "but as you have got rid of the green, get rid of that color also, as soon as you can if you wish to be safe." The men then hurried away, leaving Mr. Valiant alone.

In about a minute afterwards several constables entered and took possession of the church. By the greatest exertions of the military and the police, the infuriated Orangemen were prevented from doing further damage. A strong guard was set to protect the place; and some hours after, when the incendiary crowd had almost disappeared, the guard was replaced by a night watch. But the watchmen must have slept, for before day dawn mighty flames leaped as if to anticipate the sun rise; and all the ensuing day—one of gloom—many were looking with different feelings at the bare, bleak, dilapidated walls of the Catholic church; and those same roofless walls then stood up before all as a fresh evidence of the harmony that exists among Christian people in the "Island of Saints."*

* See accounts of Orange and Catholic riots in Belfast.

CHAPTER XIX.

MISSIONARY EFFORTS AND FAILURES.

WHAT a deluge of rain! as if the weeping heavens were anxious to wash out the blood, and to extinguish the smouldering fire caused by desperate religious riots in a Christian city. It had poured down from an early hour upon the desolate-looking streets of Belfast; and the aspect of nature was truly melancholy. But not alone did the streets seem desolate, for there were desolate homes and desolate hearts; and not alone did the heavens weep, for women and children were weeping over the recent slain. There was weeping in hospitals over those who were soon to die, and there would be weeping to-morrow over the graves of those who had come to a sudden and untimely end.

But yet all did not weep who had lost relatives or friends in the sad havoc of the previous day; there was one who felt little or no regret at what had happened. The Orange chaplain, in white gown, who desired to invoke destruction on the "man of sin," and who would have prayed that the valiant brethren that had been arrayed against popery on the late glorious Twelfth, felt that strife such as had occurred, was necessary; that in the order of Providence, there would be an eternal warring between the forces of good and evil, and that thereby good would almost always overcome. "Staunch Protestantism" was his ideal of good, as "popish mummery" was that of evil. Why, thought he, should there be weeping among the victors; the chaplain could see no reason

for tears—there should he thought, be rather rejoicing—for if one of God's faithful friends had fallen, a dozen of his enemies had been exterminated; and was not this, on the whole, a benefit—a real gain? Besides, the Protestant chaplain felt as much assured, that those of the loyal Orangemen who had yielded up their lives in battling against a foul system of lies and corruption, were just as certain of eternal glory, as some Catholic chaplains felt confident that these same Orange souls would be doomed to an eternity of brimstone for harassing and persecuting the innocent members of the only true Church. And if ordained priests, Protestant and Catholic, entertained such opposite opinions on this, as well as on cognate subjects, it may reasonably be inferred that the people whom they controlled would form similar charitable conclusions.

However, notwithstanding the heavy rain, there were occasional intermissions when one might venture out; and so people watched and waited for a chance to take a hurried walk, or even to run, to see the still smouldering ruins, and the blotches of blood, and the reddened rain-pools that marked the place of contest.

Some rubbed their hands delighted, while gazing at the evidences of the Orange triumph; others, with compressed lips and savage looks, were thinking of revenge. And yet the scene was not altogether strange, it was almost a renewal of what many of those present had witnessed more than once in their lives, and a scene such as others hoped might be viewed again—but from a different standpoint—when those that now exulted should be in consternation.

Though many eager partisans or sympathizers had thus seized opportunities of going out, even for a few minutes, to see what could be seen, many others, just as eager to gaze with satisfaction at the ruins, or to deplore the calamity, but who lived at too great a distance, were obliged to remain at home fretting the hours away, while anxiously waiting for the weather to clear up. In a row

of handsome cottages, situated in Malone, an elevated suburb south of Belfast, and commanding an extensive view, lived the Rev. Seth Graham, or rather, as the polished brass plate on his front door indicated, "Seth Graham, Missionary." Well, this same Mr. Graham, like other ministers, had peculiar views on many subjects, and, though having been duly ordained to preach the Gospel, and, as he believed, to denounce and belabor Popery and Paganism, and if need be, Prelacy also, yet he thought that no man had a right to be called "Reverend;" still, although he positively refused to have that significant prefix put before his name, he rejoiced in the more appropriate addition of "Missionary." To some extent he had been a missionary. Born and educated in the Protestant city of Belfast, and in course of time, after much theological training, set apart by Presbyterian authority for the ministry, his reading and inclination led him to become interested in missionary labor, and to such labor he fancied he had a special call; and strange to say, for one who was troubled with this notion, he took at that time a rather sensible view, and considered it his duty first to carry the "pure word" to the deluded papists of his native land, instead of wandering off from one to ten thousand miles for the purpose of reclaiming other benighted beings.

To Irish papists then he went, yet he carried the missionary notion out so far as to leave those of his native city to the chance proselyting impulses of other preachers, and he turned his steps, Bible in hand, to the far South, fully expecting he could persuade many that the Pope was the "man of sin," and the veritable anti-Christ; and sustained by a strong hope that his message would be gladly received, he first opened the "Book of books" to the staring, scornful Romanists of the old popish city of Cork.

It may be truly said, that his Holiness, the Pope, has not, even under the dome of St. Peter's, any more devoted to his cause, or more subservient to his authority, than

those of the faithful residing in the chief city of the province of Munster. From Glenmire to Black Pool, or round to Black Rock, the Catholics of Cork are far more Roman than the Romans themselves; and though these Catholics forget—many perhaps do not know—that a Pope was in a manner the main cause of the subjugation of their country to England, they now hurl anathemas upon Italian Catholics who have dared to deprive the Holy Father of his temporal power; and nowhere else in Christendom are the rich or the poor—even the almost destitute—more willing to furnish “Peter’s pence” to replenish the purse of the “Vicar of Christ,” or to say a “*pater and ave*” for his prosperity, spiritual and temporal, than those of his creed in the same Munster capital.

It was among such people, then, that Seth Graham, missionary, took a bold stand; and he wrote and spoke against prayers to the Virgin, and against invocations to saints, against confession and absolution, and transubstantiation; against penance and against purgatory; and against crosses and relics, and holy water, but all in vain. He spoke but to deaf ears, for the deluded people only jeered and laughed at him—they were most wilful in their contempt—and many times when he thought it his duty to waylay them as it were, to force them to listen, he would try to catch even a few together as they came from mass out of the principal parish chapel; he would shout aloud in order that they might hear his arguments, or his declamation, and more than once, it was with difficulty that the police and others saved him from the indignation and violence of those whom he would fain convert.

Within less than three months, then, from the time he had left Belfast, he began to suspect that he was in the wrong place, and that he was likely to have but little return for his labor, and not only for his labor, but for certain funds which he had rather lavishly distributed. Before he had commenced this missionary duty, strong appeals had been made to wealthy church members. It had been represented that the time was auspicious, that

sowers might now go forth to sow in southern fields and expect rich harvests, and Protestant Christians were entreated to furnish the indispensable supplies for this special work. Though all would no doubt earnestly pray for the success of God's servant—and prayer was admitted to be the most powerful aid—yet his hand must be otherwise strengthened if they wished these prayers to be of any avail. Long experience had already taught them this. So after much exertion, after church collections, and Sunday school collections, and solicitations from door to door, and after sundry tea meetings, got up by devoted spinsters, a liberal amount had been obtained and placed at the disposal of Mr. Graham, and to this judicious outlay among very needy Romanists, more than to his sermons or prayers, or to the distribution of cheap Bibles, or of texts, or tracts, was he indebted for the solitary half dozen Irish disciples whom he claimed to have converted.

Dissatisfied, or rather disgusted, with the results of his efforts among Irish papists in Cork, he returned to Belfast; and still full of the missionary idea, it was not long before he persuaded himself to believe that his proper place was among the heathen. Popery, although a spurious form of Christianity, had still something of its essence; had, any way, a belief in its great Founder, which was something better and safer by far than paganism or naked unbelief. He was now convinced that the true field for missionary labor was among those who knew nothing of the "Inspired Word," who had never heard the gospel message. To the heathen, therefore, he would go; he would reveal to them the "plan of salvation," without a knowledge of which they must all ultimately perish.

Yearning then, it is presumed, over the deplorable condition of the dusky inhabitants of the East, an opportunity was soon afforded him to hasten to their rescue. The great Sepoy rebellion had just been suppressed, Christianity, it was said, was gaining ground, and the false teachers of Brahminism, Buddhism, and Mahometism, were hiding their heads, ashamed and confounded. The blaze of gos-

pel light that was shed upon a benighted land—aided it might be by the blaze of Christian artillery—had produced glorious results among heathen mutineers. But faithful, courageous expounders of the word were still wanting, and volunteer missionaries were required to fill up the ranks, and to supply the places of the numbers of devoted men who had fallen a prey to native fanaticism, to severe labor, and to an oppressive and unhealthy climate.*

Approved of by the Presbyterian Board of Missions, arrangements were soon made for his departure. The outfit for a proselyting excursion to India would involve no little expense, but funds were ample. The missionary chest had always been well filled. Even though the cries of poverty at home were pitiful; even though the body were suffered to perish for lack of food, the immortal soul must be saved at any cost; so still think the Lord's servants, and so they have always thought. Well supplied, however, as he was, Mr. Graham very properly thought that it was not good for him to be alone, and that it might serve the cause could he find a suitable helpmate. He made it a subject of prayer, and before many days, was fortunate in getting a wife who, like himself, bewailing the sad condition of idolatrous heathen, was willing to leave home, and friends, and native land, and go to the furthestmost ends of the earth to spread the joyous news. Therefore, feeling himself a chosen messenger, the bearer of blessings and a well filled purse, Seth Graham and his wife went forth equipped for the missionary field, and they set sail for India to join in the unceasing war against the degraded followers of Juggernaut.

Alas for disappointed hopes! A little over two years' experience in India, fully satisfied the Belfast missionary that, notwithstanding the great efforts, the painful sacrifices, and the vast expenditures made by the friends of missionaries to establish pure Christianity among the idolatrous natives of that distant land, the results were

* See Note 9.

as yet of the most paltry kind, and would be altogether disheartening, were it not for the unwavering faith in the future, which still kept hope alive in the bosoms of many Christian ministers and people. He was aware that those Janus-faced apostles, the Jesuits, had been early among the tribes of India, and had, by fostering the system of caste, by claiming to be white Brahmins, and not foreigners, and by a deceitful compromise of religious observance, induced great numbers to believe that Christianity was a religion but slightly differing from their own faith, and therefore to receive the outward form of Christian baptism, while under the impression that that rite was something bearing a close relation to the Hindoo creed; this was the way that Romanism had obtained nearly all of its native adherents in India. But what had been the progress of Protestantism? Though tradition assigns India as the scene of the labors and martyrdom of the Apostle Thomas; though at a very early period, primitive Christianity had been introduced into that country; and though up to the present time, missionary lives and treasures had been lavishly expended, still, comparatively speaking, not more than a mere handful of natives could be claimed as having been converted to Protestantism. Scarcely over 120,000, out of a population of over two hundred millions; and out of these so-called converted natives, there were scarcely 25,000 communicants,* while on the other hand, the progress of Mohammedan missionaries had been most astonishing. They commenced their labors centuries after Christianity had gained a foothold in the East, and now have in that country over twenty-five millions who are followers of the Prophet, and who look toward Mecca instead of toward Benares. But then, it was said, that Mohammedanism was established in India as much by the sword as by any other means,

* Mullen's Census of Indian Missions, taken in 1862, gave European Missions, 408; ordaine natives, 81; Catechists, 1079; native churches, 890; native Christians, 118,893; communicants, 21,252; boy scholars, 54,888; girl scholars 14,723. Meagre results indeed!

and yet, wonderful to relate, native Mohammedans are more steadfast to their adopted creed than native Christians, and a Protestant clergyman has asserted that, "as a general thing, the Mohammedans and Hindoos have lived together with remarkable tolerance of each other's antagonistic faiths,"* while it must be reluctantly admitted that, for some reason, there seems to be a strong native prejudice against Christianity; its dictates were considered too overbearing.

Minister of peace, as Mr. Graham was, these startling facts made such an impression as to lead him to think, that where so great a benefit was to be conferred as the establishment of Christianity, and the overthrow of a grossly erroneous system, a little pressure, different from that of moral suasion, might be profitably used with stubborn nations; and he came to the conclusion, that if Christianity were ever to be established in India, such a pressure, sooner or later, would have to be exercised.

Unsuccessful as he had been among uneducated Irish Catholics, his efforts seemed hopeless, until finding that the placid philosophical Brahmins scarcely deigned to reply to what was considered but the puerile arguments of Christians. Obstinate as were the Jews in their disbelief in the Christian Messiah; irreclaimable as were most Roman Catholics, the supreme indifference of Brahmins and Buddhists was most tantalizing. Here, while under the impression that nothing could withstand the arguments of Christian ministers, Mr. Graham found that Brahminical priests, while pointing to their Rig-Veda as the most ancient of all sacred books,† alluded to Christianity, as but a thing of yesterday. They spoke of the "Liliputian chronology" of the Bible as absurd, and of the Bible itself as being only a plagiarized compilation from their own Vedas, from other sacred books, as well as

* Rev. E. D. G. Prime, D.D.

† Max Muller, Professor in Oxford University, and many other learned men, admit that the *Rig Veda* of the Brahmins, is the oldest of all sacred books.

from the sayings and writings of ancient sages, and heathen philosophers; and when he found himself unable to disprove these, and other such bold assertions, he became incensed that such blasphemy could not lawfully be punished in India as in Britain; and, under a feeling of holy indignation, he resolved to leave a land of spiritual darkness, and return to his own country, which was illuminated by the glorious rays of Gospel light.

As he had claimed to have converted a few, even in Ireland, it would not do for Seth Graham to leave the East without being able to exhibit some proof of what had been accomplished through his humble teaching in India. He, like most other missionaries, was under the impression—nay, even confident—that he had done some good among the heathen. It would not do to hear some parsimonious grumblers reassert, that the contributions of Christian people had been again wasted in wild missionary enterprises—no; when he next appeared before the Missionary Board, or on a missionary platform in Ireland, he wished to be able to give undoubted evidence of what the Lord had effected through *his* agency; and who could gainsay his usefulness, if he could bring with his bundle of Hindoo idols, and weapons, and trinkets, two or three living Hindoos as witnesses of what God had wrought through the irresistible power of His word, as dispensed by one of His most unworthy servants? He had an opportunity for doing this. About two weeks before he left Bombay, a native lady called on him, and stated that, in consequence of having expressed a desire to embrace Christianity, she had already suffered much injury—almost persecution—at the hands of her wealthy relatives, and that she had determined, rather than be obliged to conform to the religious practices which she had now abandoned forever, to go to some Christian land, where she could be free to worship as she pleased, without any interference from others; and had, therefore, made up her mind to go to England. She had, she said, been informed that Mr. Graham was about to return to that country, and,

as an evidence of her sincerity, she desired that he should baptize her and her little nephew—a boy of about eight or nine years—to whom she had given Christian instructions, and whom she wished to take with her, as if left in India, he would relapse to Hindooism; and she therefore considered it a sacred duty to save one so dear to her from a superstition which might endanger his eternal happiness. The lady adopted the Christian name of Sarah, and the boy was known as Hemar.

Mr. Graham, delighted with the proposal, not only readily acquiesced, but in order to make sure of such a spiritual prize, he persuaded her to accept his hospitality in the meantime. The native lady, though apparently in good circumstances, was quite willing to become his guest, as she wished to get away as privately as possible; but the little boy, her nephew, was reluctant to go to the house of a stranger; her intention seemed to fret him very much; he spoke of his mother, and wanted to go home—though he then knew not its direction; and were it not for the watchfulness of his aunt, as well as the eager desire of Mr. Graham, he would have made his escape.

Besides these converts Mrs. Graham, the missionary's wife, had a Parsee girl called Sheva that had either been kidnapped, or induced to wander away from her parents' home in Bombay. As it was, Mrs. Graham, being herself childless, seemed to take a rare interest in the girl, and pitying her spiritually destitute condition, not only induced her to become a Christian, but to refuse to return to her parents. Being much depressed at the departure of their child, the parents made every inquiry, and when they discovered, as they supposed, her place of retreat, made a demand that she should be given up. But Mr. Graham and his good wife, having the girl's spiritual interest at heart, denied that she was in their house, and denied all knowledge of her whereabouts, and not only protested against being suspected of keeping her concealed, but threatened to appeal to the law against an impu-

tation so unjust. The parents thus baffled went sadly away; they knew not that their child's affections had been alienated, or that she had been secretly baptized by a Christian priest, and though the same priest might admit that it would be wrong to teach a child to forget its natural parents, he might think it a far greater wrong to allow her to return to those who were unable to give her a knowledge of the true God, and thus imperil her salvation.*

In due time Mr. Graham and his wife with their converts landed in England. The season was chilly, there was snow on the hills, and thin sheets of ice were spread over ponds and pools, and even upon running water. What a change from the hot breath of India! The sight must have been depressing to the natives of the East, for the Hindoo lady appeared to have become suddenly restless and discontented; her natural vivacity had given way to a sullenness of manner which was noticed by all; and her first day in a foreign land had scarcely closed in a dreary night, when, without giving the least intimation, she and her nephew suddenly disappeared. A hurried search had been made, inquiries here and there had been fruitless, no one had seen her, no one could give the least reliable information about such a person, and no clue could be obtained as to her place of retreat. Everything had been managed with such secrecy and tact as to lead one to suppose that she knew Gravesend—the first port at which they touched—and every person in it. Her two trunks and a few valuables had also been removed; and the only hint in any way relating to her which they could get, was from a waterman who stated that about dusk that evening he saw a dark featured, foreign looking woman in conversation with some wandering gypsies who were going towards London. He afterwards saw the same person on one of the river steamers, but she had no boy with her—she was alone—of this he was certain, for being

* See Note 10.

rather puzzled, as he said, by her manner and appearance he watched the steamboat leave the wharf, and he saw the strange woman sit apart from the other passengers, and just as it was growing dark she wrapped a heavy shawl or mantle about her as if preparing to sleep until she got to the city.

Unsatisfactory as this information was, it set the missionary thinking. Who could this woman be? Could it be his lady protegee—his Hindoo convert Sarah? If so what a vile deceiver! He then became somewhat excited and felt inclined to curse the whole race of pagans, and to upbraid himself and others for wasting time and money in futile attempts to rescue them from deserved perdition. Sorely annoyed as he then was he could have wished for another Sepoy rebellion in order that it might bring them extermination. After the end of his long voyage he intended to pray that night, and return thanks for their escape from the dangers of the deep; he intended that his converts should have had a touching evidence of his deep piety, but how could he pray now, or for whom? How hard for him to approach the "Throne of Grace" under such circumstances. And yet, after all, he did pray—it had become a habit—but alas! his prayer was not for tender mercies, but for fierce judgment on Pope, and pagan, and infidel, and on those that refuse the gospel. He knew that kings, prophets, and apostles, of old had hurled condemnation upon the heathen; and as these should still be denounced, he urged the Lord to banish unbelief and to thunder in the ears of scoffers the deserved threat: "When your fear cometh as a desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you, then shall ye call upon me, but I will not answer," and after this closing petition the missionary upon the first night of his return retired to slumber, and it might be to dream of converting savages in other lands.

CHAPTER XX.

MORALITY WITHOUT THE BIBLE.

EXPERIENCE has fully proved that ministers of the gospel are no less disconcerted by the trials and disappointments of life than persons who have never had apostolic hands laid upon them. Priests, from the nature of their calling, though presumed to possess more of the virtue of forbearance and resignation than ordinary men, have too often been sadly deficient when required to be an example unto others, and as a class they have never shown themselves superior to common sinners in the hour of trouble, of temptation, or of misfortune. This glaring fact—for fact it is—has emboldened many doubters to assert that religion, in the time of adversity, has never yet surpassed, if it has ever yet equaled, the calm philosophy of sages, ancient and modern, who had neither belief in theological creeds, nor in inspired books.

One might go back to so-called Apostolic times, and allude to the record of the weakness and prevarication of Peter; the infamous betrayal of Judas; the contention between Paul and Barnabas; and the jealousy and dictatorial ambition of Paul himself. The history of the early Christian Fathers, will show a repulsive side of human nature, as exemplified in the wilfully unscrupulous statements and fabrications of such as Ireneus, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, and others, who were so thoroughly mendacious in the desire to propagate their crude doctrines, as to justify the remark that "*Omnis homo mendax*," may

be accepted as an inspired aphorism.* Later still, have not the priests of Rome, and of England, and of almost every other country, proved, as a body, to be ambitious and resentful, and the veriest slaves of mystery and intrigue. They have been credulous or doubtful, servile or tyrannical as circumstances permitted or required; and, at the present day, the journalistic record of clerical fallibility and crime, regularly flaunted before the eyes of all—believers and unbelievers—is truly infamous; and yet, notwithstanding all this, the clergy have still the audacity to assert that, without them and their creeds, there could be no more morality, no more faithfulness, no more peace among men; ignoring the fact that their own morality is too questionable, their own faithfulness too unreliable, and their promised peace, but the excited jarring of theological opinions, the hatred of sects, and the persecutions of bigotry. They are evidently desirous of forgetting that the only age of the world which can be truly called the “Pacific Age,” was that immediately preceding the period assigned for the birth of the Christian Messiah: a period when the whole world was sunken in so-called “heathenish darkness,” yet, withal, no such time has ever since returned to bless mankind.

As history has borne sad evidence in relation to the superiority of the morals and humanity which Christian priests assert must result solely from the adoption of one

* In the early centuries of Christianity, pious misrepresentations were quite common. Following the example of Paul, many of the Christian Fathers did not hesitate to invent and circulate that which was untrue, in order to benefit the Church. The interpolation in Josephus, now admitted by Dr. Chalmers and others to be a forgery, is charged against Eusebius, who was most unscrupulous in furnishing apocryphal testimonials for the support of truth. In the 12th Book of his “Evangelical Preparation,” Eusebius devotes a chapter to prove that falsehood ought to be used when required; and he heads the 31st chapter with the question, “How far it may be proper to use falsehood as a medicine?” Referring to the Christian clergy of the fourth century, Dr. Mosheim, the learned divine and historian, admits, “That it was an almost universally adopted maxim, that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by such means the interests of the Church might be promoted.”—Vol. 1, p. 193.

of the most modern creeds, let us glance at what has been said as to the standing and influence of some of those who lived before Christianity was introduced to enlighten the world. It is the fashion of Christian ministers to decry Paganism, and to represent it as a system which has been most debasing in its effects. Like other religious systems, it has its dark side as well as its bright one, yet it is only fair to hear something of what has been said in its favor by men whose opinions candid persons admit to be above suspicion, and whose statements have not as yet been refuted.

Among those ancient pagans, who, according to a common orthodox phrase, "knew not God," the names of many of the finest characters on record are to be found. Without alluding to kings, to soldiers, or to priests—the "dead-heads" of society—who have ever been the prime elements of strife, we find poets, philosophers, orators, musicians, statesmen, physicians, scientists, and astronomers, some of whose pure minds have furnished gems of thought even for the pages of inspiration; while the wonderful talents and surprising intuitions of others, have guided men, in nearly every vocation, through the ages down to the present day. To establish this, it is not necessary to grope into dim antiquity, nor need we seek to discover who it was that suggested the erection of the mighty pyramids of Egypt, or whose grand conceptions gave expression to the once shining face of Memnon, or set up the towering Sphinx, with placid countenance, to gaze for ages upon the flowing Nile, and out upon the desert beyond; neither is it necessary to name the daring architects that excavated the vast cave temples of Ipsamboul, and those of India; that designed the gorgeous palaces, or that raised the immense statues and symmetrical obelisks of ancient Egypt, which, after a lapse of thousands of years, are still the pride and glory of the intellectual world. No; let these dead pagans rest, they were the great preachers of their time, and their texts can still be read in the mountains of sculptured granite, and in the

colossal blocks which they piled and beautified so that future generations might have ample evidence of the depth and sincerity of the faith of those who worshiped Christna or Osiris. Instead of these, let us deal with some of the pagans of subsequent centuries, and name but a few who lived and flourished in the yesterday of time, even as late as a thousand years before the reputed advent of Christ.

It may commence with Homer, the so-called "father of poetry," and who, Sir William Temple says, "was, without doubt, the most universal genius that has ever been known in the world;" and of whose poems it has been said: "It was by these poems that all the worthies of antiquity were formed. Hence the law-givers, the founders of monarchies and commonwealths, took the model of their politics, hence the philosophers drew their first principles of morality, hence physicians have studied diseases and their cures, astronomers have learned the knowledge of the heavens, and geometricians of the earth." Great Homer! who, among the Christian priests and prophets, have ever truly deserved more veneration?

Then, following Homer, what an intellectual array! Thales stands before us chief of the sages, one of whose moral maxims was: "Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing." "Enrich not thyself by unjust means." And Pythagoras, whose teaching, it has been said, "was of the purest and most spiritual kind—self restraint, sincerity, and purity of heart, were especially commended; and conscientiousness and uprightness in the affairs of life would seem to have been its distinguishing characteristics." Among the sayings of this uninspired philosopher are the following words of wisdom: "Do what you believe to be right, whatever people think of you." "It is impossible that he can be free who is a slave to his passions." Then we have Solon, eminently distinguished as a law giver, who said: "Study excellence, and aim at acquiring it." "Those are happy who act honestly and live temperately." "Reverence thy parents." "Cherish

thy friend." Who can equal *Æsop* in philosophical fables? what parables have ever been more useful to mankind? As dramatists, there is *Æschylus* the father of tragedy, and *Thespis* with his wandering troop, and *Euripides*, said to be the author of over ninety tragedies, in which, it is asserted, "He is of all writers remarkable for having interspersed moral reflections and philosophical aphorisms in his dramatic pieces."

In history *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Manetho*, are regarded as being at least as correct and impartial as any modern writers, and as a general thing undeviating in their fidelity to truth. (What of some of our ecclesiastical historians, Protestants and Catholic?)

As orators *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* have never yet been surpassed; they are still the models of statesmen and priests; they continue to dignify politics, and to inspire inspiration.

As mathematicians, *Euclid*, *Archimedes*, and *Eudoxius* still give lessons to some of our professors, and *Hippocrates* is still revered as the father of medicine and "prince of physicians." To these might be added *Aristotle* and others.

But the names of philosophers now perhaps most commonly spoken of are *Confucius* and *Socrates*, to the former of whom is ascribed the authorship of the "Golden Rule," which was centuries afterward transferred to so-called "sacred writ" as an original saying of *Jesus*. Of this great pagan it has been said: "His integrity and the splendor of his virtues made him beloved; kings were governed by his counsels, and the people revered him as a saint;" and of *Socrates*, whose character it is said equalled if not surpassed that of any individual recorded in the Bible. "The purity of his life and his serenity in the hour of death have been the admiration of all, and many prominent Christians take pleasure in associating *Socrates* with *Jesus*." When near his end—having been unjustly condemned to die—he addressed his weeping judges, and, with other exalted remarks, said: "Wherefore, O Judges,

be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the Gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that to die and be released is better for me.”* What an example of hope and resignation for orthodox fanatics!

With these we have a Plato, whose “sublime philosophy” has been eulogized by scholars in every age, and whose writings, it is said, “consist in that grand union of abstract thought, imaginative decoration, emotional purity, and noble activity, which is the model of a complete and richly endowed humanity.” Read! these are his words: “God is truth, and light is His shadow.” “The perfectly just man would be he who should love justice for its own sake, not for the honors or advantages that attend; who would be willing to pass for unjust while he practiced the most exact justice; who would not suffer himself to be moved by disgrace or distress, but would continue steadfast in the love of justice, not because it is pleasant, but because it is right.”

These great pagans are but a few of the excellent of the earth, who knew nothing of a “Divine Revelation,” but whose great minds conceived a morality never surpassed.† The propagandist priests of Christianity have been ever ready to point out the foibles, and to magnify the errors of these prominent men, and to convict them of licentiousness and inhumanity. They are not free from censure—the wisest men have erred—but they are far from being so depraved as it is the interest of the Church to make them appear. They found it, no doubt, necessary—like some philosophers and scientists at the present day—to show an appearance of conformity to a religion or superstition in which many of them had but little faith,

* Nearly 500 years afterward St. Paul is said to have written: “To die is gain.”

† See Note 11.

yet with all the charges that have been urged against them,* they will not appear the more degraded by a contrast of their most glaring errors, or even their imputed crimes, with the gross, debasing licentiousness, and terrible inhumanity of a Moses, an Aaron, a Joshua, a David, and a Solomon; besides a hundred others of the depraved kings, priests, and prophets of the "book of books," whose maxims and whose morals, if exhibited in the lives and actions of men at the present day, would be pronounced contaminating to society. What ideal excellence have we even now that is not in some way a filtration of the grand thoughts, or the development of the embryonic conceptions of the pagan of other days? How far in advance of them are we in mental or material progress? They have scarcely left us anything to originate; our greatest discoveries are perhaps but mere traces of the lost arts. Besides the hundred gates they have thrown open that we may visit an intellectual Thebes, besides the metaphysical hieroglyphics which they have left us to decipher, they have given, with innumerable sages, and many amazing structures, the seven wise men of Greece, and the seven wonders of the world. Pagan and unbelievers! What might the world have gained if there had been more of such? What errors, what inhumanity, what bloodshed, and what sorrow might have been escaped, had men been guided by the simple philosophy of unpretending heathens, instead of having been mystified by creeds, or demoralized by the crude, contradictory bewildering pages of so-called inspiration!

But although these excellent men have long passed away they are still gratefully remembered; no one can fairly establish even a doubt as to their existence. They

* The evidences of Christianity must be in a laboring condition indeed, if they require us to imagine that a Cicero, Tacitus, or Pliny were worshipers of gods of wood or stone; or to force on our apprehensions such a violence as that we should imagine that the mighty mind that had enriched the world with Euclid's Elements of Geometry, could have bowed to the deities of Euclid's Egypt and worshiped leeks and crocodiles.—Rev. R. Taylor "Diegesis," p. 14

were real characters; there was nothing mythical about their race or their origin. Where they lived, and what they said, and what they wrote, are matters of certainty. Can the same assurance ever be given as to the existence of the several "sacred writers," or plagiarists, and prophets, and apostles, and saints, to whom is attributed the authorship of the various books, or tracts, composing the Bible, and whom the orthodox extol above all others as exemplars of virtue? Doubt has ever cast its deepest shadow upon prophecy, and miracle and inspiration. The belief of many unbelievers is mostly a continued struggle with reason. Fiction seems to be the principal constituent of ecclesiastical records. The most deceptive web of error is that which has a golden selvege of truth; and what is theology but a patchwork of truth and fiction, of wisdom and absurdity? In this reasoning, scientific and practical age, the number is fast increasing who can neither believe in Isaiah's predictions nor in Daniel's wild visions; who cannot conceive that Joshua ever made the sun stand still upon Gibeon, or that the moon ever remained stationary in the valley of Ajalon; who will not believe that the witch of Endor ever raised the prophet Samuel, or that Nebuchadnezzar "ate grass like an ox," or that Baalam's ass ever uttered a word. They consider the legend relating to the labors of Hercules just as credible as the narrative concerning the strength of Sampson; the war with Jupiter and the Giants just as likely to have occurred as the war with Lucifer in heaven; and the story of Phaeton's wild horses rushing toward's the earth just as probable as the ascent of Elijah's fiery chariot in the opposite direction; and still in this utter disbelief such skeptics neither expect to become the victims of an incensed Jupiter nor of an incensed Jehovah.

In polemical difficulties, equivocation is often as necessary as pretension for Doctors of Divinity. The virtues of ancient pagans have been so well established that some who boastingly assert that there can be no morality without the Bible, have been obliged to concede—in order

to support this priestly notion—that several of these renowned pagans were actually Christians—yes Christians before Christ!—and the religion which they practised was really Christianity in a kind of disguise. Yet do not many consider that Christianity is even still the disguise of an older creed; still nothing more than the “Buddhism of the West,” for its prominent doctrines are inculcated in the Vedas, and several of the remarkable incidents connected with the life of the Hindoo Savior Christna, are repeated in those which are remarkable in the life of Christ.* As the record of Christna dates back ages before the alleged time of Christ, can it be asked which of the incidents referred to are entitled to priority—which the imitation? Clark, a prominent Christian writer, in his “Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,” states: “Some of the ancientest writers of the Church have not scrupled expressly to call the Athenian *Socrates*, and some others of the best of the heathen moralists, by the name of CHRISTIANS, and to affirm, that as the law was as it were a schoolmaster to bring the Jews unto Christ, so true moral philosophy was to the Gentiles a preparation to receive the gospel.” P. 284.

Clemens Alexandrinus, one of the early Christians, also says: “And those who lived according to the Logos were really Christians, though they have been thought to be Atheists, as *Socrates* and *Heraclitus* were among the Greeks, and such as resembled them.”

And then we have other important admissions of the “Christian Fathers,” and writers, such as that of the shrewd, unscrupulous Origen, who, unable to detract from the excellent lives and maxims of certain heathens, says: “For God revealed these things unto them, and what-

* Such as the incarnation of Christna, born of a virgin, the adoration of shepherds, the escape of the mother and child from the tyrant Kansa, the slaughter of male children by the same tyrant, etc., etc. Sir William Jones, the great writer on India, says: “That the name of Christna and the general outline of his history were long anterior to the birth of our Savior, and probably to the time of Homer, we know very certainly.”

ever things have been well spoken." And Lactantius writes: "And if there had been any one to have collected the truth that was scattered and diffused [by pagans] among sects and individuals, into one, and to have reduced it to a system, there would indeed have been no difference between him and us." "What then? and do the philosophers recommend nothing like the precepts of the gospel? Yes, indeed, they do very many, and often approach to truth; only their precepts have no weight, as being merely human, and devoid of that greater and divine authority; and nobody believes because the hearer thinks himself as much a man as he who prescribes them." Lactant, *Libs.* 3 and 7.

And of Cicero's works Arnobius says: "And if Cicero's works had been read as they ought to have been by the heathens, there would have been no need of Christian writers." Yet, further, hear the grand admission of St. Augustine: "For the thing itself which is now called the CHRISTIAN RELIGION really was known to the ancients, nor was wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, from whence the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called Christian; and then in our days in the Christian religion, not as having been wanted in former times, but as having in later times received this name."—*Augus.* Vol. 1, P. 12.*

These admissions so distinctly stated by leaders in the Christian Church ought to be ample proof that the purest morality existed before the pages of the Bible were known to man. India, said to be the cradle of humanity, civilization, and religion, derived its excellent precepts from the Vedas—the Rig Veda is acknowledged to be the oldest sacred literary work in existence—and from these books

* So pure were the doctrines of many of the ancient philosophers that they were accounted fit to be incorporated with those of Christianity. Mosheim says: "The coalition between Platoism and Christianity, in the second and third centuries, is a fact too fully proved to be rendered dubious by mere affirmations."—Vol. 1, P. 170.

the numerous religions of the world have derived their various "Incarnations," and "Saviors," and "Trinities," and "Plans of Salvation;" from these books all their doctrines have been deduced—this is unquestionable. Sir William Jones, himself a Christian, acknowledged to be perhaps the best authority on India, writes of the primitive religion: "A spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures, pervades the whole work [Institutes of Menu]; the style of it has a certain austere majesty that sounds like the language of legislation, and extorts a respectful awe; the sentiments of independence of all beings but God, and the harsh admonitions even to kings, are truly noble; and the many panegyrics on the Guata, the mother, as it is called, of the Veda, proved the author to have adored (not the visible material sun but) that divine and incomparable greater light, to use the words of the most venerable text in the Indian scriptures, which illumines all, delights all, from which all proceed, to which all must return, and which alone can irradiate (not our visual organs merely but) our souls and our intellects."

And John Adams, in a letter to Thomas Jefferson, says: "Where is to be found theology more orthodox or philosophy more profound than in the introduction to the Shasta? 'God is one creator of one universal sphere, without beginning, without end. God governs all the creation by a general providence resulting from his eternal designs,' etc. These doctrines—sublime if ever there were any sublime—Pythagoras learned in India, and taught them to Zallucus and his other disciples."

In "Forbes' Oriental Memoirs," the Hindoo character is thus represented: "Piety, obedience to superiors, resignation in misfortune, charity, hospitality, filial, parental and conjugal affection, are among the distinguishing characteristics of the Hindoos."

And Persia, too, had its morality. The Zend Avesta is its inspired book, and a Christian bishop speaks thus in

its favor: "The morality of the Zend Avesta is entitled to praise; purity of word, action and thought, is repeatedly inculcated. To multiply the human species, increase its happiness, and prevent evil, are the general duties inculcated by Zoroaster to his disciples; agriculture and the multiplication of the useful arts are particularly recommended to them." *Roman Horæ Biblicæ*. Sir William Jones also adds his testimony: "The primeval religion of Iran, if we may rely on the authorities adduced by Monsani Fani, was that which Newtown calls the oldest (and it may justly be called the noblest) of all religions; a firm belief that 'One supreme God made the world by His power, and continually governs it by His providence; a pious fear, love and adoration of Him; and due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species; and a compassionate tenderness for the brute creation.'" Here is a text from the book itself: "Opposition to peace is a sin. Reply to thine enemy with gentleness."

China and Japan were rich in moral teachings. Confucius and Mencius, the Chinese philosophers, were apostles of truth who preached a gospel never yet surpassed, and through their maxims have adorned "inspiration," and though they have been cannonized by the great high priests of every land, still they made their own destiny subservient to the moral doctrines that existed even before their time. The people of Japan, known as a "friendly race," are approved for their filial conduct, and for their great industry and cleanliness. As to the alleged barbarism of these people, a Rev. gentleman in a work lately published, ironically observes:* "I have wished a hundred times since coming to Japan that we could import into our own and some other civilized countries a measure of this want of civilization, or barbarism, or whatever one may choose to call it." And as to their shameful treatment by Christian nations, he says: "The

* Rev. E. D. G. Prime, D.D.—"Around the World," 1872.

Christian world owes a heavy debt to those heathen nations which have suffered so much at the hands of Christian journalists."

Egypt, ancient Egypt, may well boast of civilization; the most obstinate clerical fanatic can do but little indeed with the puny opposition he might bring against the claims of this once great nation. It may be said that, in many respects, Egypt towers above most other countries, just as the pyramid towers above the desert. Of this land, Rollin the historian, writes: "Egypt was ever considered by all the ancients as the most renowned school for wisdom and politics, and the source from whence most of the arts and sciences were derived. This kingdom bestowed its noblest labors and its finest arts on the improvement of mankind; and Greece was so sensible of this, that its most illustrious men, as Homer, Pythagoras, Plato, even its great legislators, Lycurgus and Solon, with more whom it is useless to mention, traveled into Egypt to complete their studies, and to draw from that fountain whatever was most rare and valuable in every kind of learning."

As for Greece, and Rome, all history bears evidence to their past greatness. Nearly every one of their pagan heroes and heroines seem to have been characters of the highest human excellence. They were not frightened into virtue by theology.

Where can we find men more desirous of doing justice and benefiting the human race than Socrates or Plato, or more exemplary than Lycurgus or Cincinnatus? Where can we find chastity to surpass that of Lucretia; or honesty that of Aristides; or disinterestedness that of Timoleon? And now, after all the wild shouting of our modern clergy, have their contending creeds produced better results for the world at large than those arising from paganism or unbelief? Are Christian priests better men than their pagan predecessors? Have the Christian clergy shown more self-denial, or more disregard for wealth, and position, and authority than the expounders of the Vedas, the

Zend Avesta, or even the Koran? And the great question on the whole may be, has Christianity, alone and unaided, made men more intelligent, more truthful, more perfect, more dignified, more contented and more humane than paganism left them; has it, as the popular religion of Europe and America, diminished more poverty and crime, or lessened the evils of war, or produced a higher regard for human life; has the slaughter almost constantly occurring during the last eighteen hundred years, equalled or exceeded that under paganism during any previous period of the same duration? Enormous as the cost of the Christian religion is at the present day—extortionate assessments or demands to pay the ecclesiastical incomes of popes, cardinals, arch-bishops, deans, rectors, moderators, curates, and the remaining vast swarm of the clergy of all denominations seeking maintenance; incessant demands for the erection of grand cathedrals and palatial churches, and for the circulation of Bibles and tracts; and increasing demand for missionary and other similar purposes—enormous as these assessments and demands really are, they, after all, fall short of the millions required and expended by Christian nations for the dreadful purposes of war; the Christian clergy, who assume to be men of peace, or who contribute little or nothing to the taxes imposed for the creating and support of hostile fleets and invading armies, are yet among the first to urge others to engage in bloody strife, and submit to the exaction, even though asylums, and hospitals, and charitable institutions, should at the same time be languishing for necessary supplies. Doubters will still ask: What has Christianity done for the nations? What is Athens now to what it was in the the time of Pericles? Whether was Rome greatest in its Augustan, or in its Pontifical age.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming evidence which can be adduced to prove that the standard of morality is but little, if at all, in advance of what it was eighteen hundred years ago, celestial envoys such as Seth Graham,

Missionary unable to disprove the existence of justice, and integrity at that period, will pertinaciously assert that the minds of men in the early ages had been impregnated with the morality of the Old Testament, without which mankind would have been in the most deplorable condition. Old Testament! It were, perhaps, better not to give special instances of what that morality consisted; it were better not to quote from the "inspired" record of the loves of some of the elect of those terrible times, their obscenities, their inhumanities or their savage, wanton butcheries. Morality? Shocking! One instance may suffice; read the life of the "Psalmist"—called, "the man after God's own heart," and if any pagan, since or before his respected time, has proved more wicked, more sensual, more abandoned, more treacherous, and more inhumanly cruel than the illustrious King David, then history is but fable.

To be plain, nothing but the most daring disregard for strict accuracy, or the most overwhelming idea of self-righteousness, can still urge certain ministers of the gospel to repudiate the goodness that is natural to mankind; for it is positively false to assert that man is by nature either "totally depraved," or "devilish." After all the foolish cavilling as to the existence of morality without the Bible, Christian writers of undoubted authority admit and fully prove that the excellence of the morality of the ancient world was alone sufficient for the guidance of men—the ethics of "inspiration" being no way superior, and certainly not original. Those who lived in the early ages of the world were possible of human feelings as well as of human forms; they had an affectionate regard for their parents, their wives and their children; they could be faithful to their friends and magnanimous to enemies; they could pity the suffering, could weep with those that wept, and shed tears of sorrow over the graves of those who had departed; they were as industrious, as kind, as benevolent, as humane, and altogether as virtuous as people of modern times; there was then, perhaps, even

less selfishness among men than there is at present. It is stated that: "Among the primitive nations of the world alms-giving was inculcated as a religious observance, and is prescribed as such in their religious books." "In early times Athens could boast of having no citizen in want, nor did any disgrace the nation by begging." An Athenian decree provided for the maintenance of those who had been mutilated in battle, and for the children of those who fell. Among the Romans charitable legislation was frequent; the holding of land was limited as to extent, and those who had none got a portion to cultivate. (How much such legislation is needed at the present day!) Grain was distributed to the poor, first at a reduced rate, but afterwards gratuitously; and it is said that the most distinguished Roman senators exercised their patience by speaking in public in behalf of the poor and oppressed; and while the most humble citizen was not forgotten by the nation, children were trained to be regardful of their parents, and education was considered highly necessary.

As the dissension and cruel strife long existing among the different Christian denominations are a matter of world-wide notoriety, it may now be well to inquire how the pagan or philosophical sects of ancient times held together. The following extracts relating to those people are admitted to be correct. Gibbon, the historian, says: "In their writings and conversation the philosophers of antiquity asserted the independent dignity of reason; but they resigned their actions to the command of law and custom. Viewing with a smile of pity and indulgence the various errors of the vulgar, they dilligently practiced the ceremonies of their fathers, devoutly frequented the temples of the gods; and sometimes condescending to act a part in the theatre of superstition, concealed the sentiments as an atheist under the sacerdotal robe. It was indifferent to them what shape the folly of the multitude might choose to assume; and they approached with the same inward contempt and the same external reverence to the altars of the Lybian, the Olympian, of the Capito-

line Jupiter." Mosheim, the Christian historian, also says: "One thing indeed, appears at first sight very remarkable—that the variety of religions and gods in the heathen world, neither produced wars nor dissensions among the different nations." "Each nation suffered its neighbors to follow their own method of worship, to adore their own gods, to enjoy their own rites and ceremonies, and discovered no displeasure at the diversities of sentiments in religious matters. They all looked upon the world as one great empire, divided into various provinces, over every one of which, a certain order of divinities presided, and that, therefore, none could behold with contempt the gods of other nations or force strangers to pay homage to theirs."

And alluding to the toleration allowed in the ancient Roman empire, Mosheim further adds: "The Romans exercised this toleration in the amplest manner, for though they would not allow any change to be made in the religion of the empire, nor any new form of worship to be openly introduced, yet they granted to their citizens a full liberty of observing in private, the sacred rites of other nations, and of honoring foreign deities (whose worship contained nothing inconsistent with the interests and laws of the republic) with feasts, temples, consecrated groves and the like testimonials of homage and respect." (Ecc. hist.)

And Renan says: "We may search in vain the Roman law before Constantine for a single passage against freedom of thought, and the history of the imperial government furnishes no instance of a prosecution for entertaining an abstract doctrine." (Hist. Apostles, p. 259.) What a sad contrast with the toleration of Christian governments.

Mosheim thus inquires: "A very natural curiosity calls us to inquire how it happened that the Romans who were troublesome to all nations on account of its religion, and who suffered even the Jews to live under their own laws and follow their own method of worship, treated the

Christians alone with such severity. A principal reason of the severity with which the Romans persecuted the Christians notwithstanding these considerations, seems to have been the abhorrence and *contempt* felt by the latter *for the religion of the empire*, which was so intimately connected with the form and indeed with the very essence of its political constitution; for though the Romans gave an unlimited toleration to all religions which had nothing dangerous to the commonwealth, yet they would not permit that of their ancestors which was established by the laws of the land, to be turned into *derision*, nor the people to be drawn away from their attachment to it." (Ecc. Hist.)

The *ten* persecutions alleged to have taken place under Roman emperors are now admitted by impartial Christian historians to be ten exaggerations. Even allowing that there were twenty such persecutions what would the total number destroyed be, compared to the actual thousands slaughtered by Christians in contesting some particular Christian doctrine; how few compared to the vast number by Christians during the crusades; and when we consider the millions destroyed to establish Papal supremacy, and the number of Protestants slaughtered by Protestants, the Christians destroyed by Roman persecutions would be an almost insignificant collection.

Referring to the *ten* persecutions which certain Christian writers assert had taken place, Gibbon says; "The ingenious parallels of the *ten* plagues of Egypt, and the *ten* horns of the Apocalypse, first suggested this calculation to their minds." And a late writer says: "In the fourth century, no settled theories of the number of persecutions seems to have been adopted, Lactantius reckons up but six." (Cham. Enc.)

If the following account is reliable what a fiendish system an intelligent pagan must consider Christianity: From the rise of popery in 606, to the present time, it is estimated by careful and credible historians that more than FIFTY MILLIONS of the human family have been

slaughtered for the crime of heresy—an average of more than *forty thousand religious murders* for every year of the existence of Popery.” In a note added to this we have stated: “A MILLION of Waldenses perished in France; NINE HUNDRED THOUSAND orthodox Christians were slain in less than thirty years after the institution of the order of Jesuits. The Duke of Alva boasted of having put to death in the Netherlands THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND by the hand of the common executioner during the space of a few years. The Inquisition destroyed, by various tortures, ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND within thirty years.” *

Now, if we had the “actual figures” of those who have been unmercifully dealt with by fanatical Protestants—of those who have been persecuted by Puritans, and tortured by “Pilgrim Fathers,” or butchered by other furious zealots of the Reformed Church, would not the great aggregate of victims be woeful? Is there no one who can weep for the crimes of this Christian Church? Is there no one who can blush for its still shameless pretensions? Hush—what a fearful picture! Is there no one who can blot out this infernal record against outraged humanity?

Alluding to the manner in which heathenism is generally spoken of by Christian ministers and people, the Rev. Robert Taylor remarks: “As it would not be fair to take up our notion of the Christian religion, from the lowest and most ignorant of its professors, and still less perhaps, to estimate its merits, by the representations which its known and avowed enemies would be likely to give; the balance of equal justice on the other side, will forbid ever forming our estimate of the ancient paganism from the misconceptions of its unworthy votaries, or the interested detractions and exaggerations of its Christian opponents.

The only just and honorable estimate will be that which shall judge of paganism as Christians would wish their own religion to be judged—by its absolute documents, by

* Dowley's Hist. of Romanism, p. 542, and note Scott's Ch. Hist.

the representations of its advocates, and the admissions of its adversaries.

When it is borne in mind that a supernatural origination or divine authority is not claimed for these systems of theology, there can be no occasion to fear their rivalry, or encroachment on systems founded on such a claim; and still less to decry witchcraft, and scandalize them, as any means of exalting or magnifying those. There cannot be the least doubt that in dark and barbarous ages, the rude and unlettered part of mankind would grossly pervert the mythical or allegorical sense, if such there were, in the forms of religion propounded to their observance or impose on their simplicity, while it is impossible that those enlightened and philosophical characters, who have left us in their writings the most undoubted evidence of the greatest shrewdness of intellect, extent of inquiry and goodness of heart, should have understood their theology in no better or higher significance than as it was understood by the ignorant of their own persuasion, or would be represented by their enemies, who had the strongest possible interest in defaming and decrying it. When the worst is done in this way, Christianity would be but little the gainer by being weighed in the same scales. Should we be allowed to fix on the darkest day of her eleven hundred years of dark ages, and to pit the grossest notion of the grossest ignorance of that day, as specimens of Christianity, against the views which Christians have been generally pleased to give as representations of paganism, how would they abide the challenge? Look on this picture and on this."

Notwithstanding all that has been done by missionaries, notwithstanding the "running to and fro," "the preaching of repentance," and the scattering of thousands of Bibles all over the earth, the Brahmin is still steadfast in his faith and he still prizes the morality and the beautiful precepts of the Vedas when he can read therein: "He who gives alms goes to the highest place in heaven; he goes to the gods." "Any place where the

mind of man can be undisturbed is suitable for the worship of the Supreme Being." The vulgar look for their gods in water; the ignorant think they reside in wood, bricks, and stones; men of more extended knowledge seek theirs in celestial orbs; but wise men worship the universal soul." "The way to eternal beatitude is open to him who without omission speaketh the truth." "As a thousand rays emanate from one flame, thus do all souls emanate from the One Eternal Soul, and return to him."

And the Buddhist disregarding all other creeds, believes that he has all truth when he reads in the sacred word of Buddha. "As the bee collects nectar, and departs without injuring the flower, or its color, or perfume, so let the sage dwell on earth." "Like a beautiful flower, full of color, but without perfume, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly." "As on a heap of rubbish cast upon the highways, the lily will grow, full of sweet perfumes and delightful, thus the disciple of the truly enlightened Buddha shines forth by his knowledge among those who are like rubbish, among the people that walk in darkness." "Cut out the love of self like autumn lotus, with thy hand! Cherish the road to peace." "He whose evil deeds are covered by good deeds brightens up this world like the moon free from clouds."

O, philosophers, can ye tell who alone has wisdom? O, ye priests of a hundred sects, if ye cannot reconcile your conflicting creeds, can ye prove to the world who alone has truth?

CHAPTER XXI.

TRICKS OF TRADE.

AFTER every hurried search and inquiry for the fugitives had proved ineffectual, Seth Graham, Missionary, in spite of his holy calling, felt greatly annoyed by the treacherous disappearance of his fancied converts. A short time before he had left Bombay he had written to one of the principal secretaries of the Missionary Society in Ireland, mentioning the necessity of his early return on account of the ill health of himself and his wife, and he had also given a rather generous account of his success among the heathen. He modestly intimated that many of the natives had already given the most touching expressions of regret at his intended departure, and that living evidences of his spiritual triumphs would, he trusted, soon be exhibited on a missionary platform in both England and Ireland. Upon receipt of this intelligence, certain ministers at home took the earliest opportunity of announcing the same from their pulpits, and certain of the missionary-mad, both lay and clerical, rubbed their hands in joyful anticipation of the rich treat that was in store for pious free-givers; and these ministers also trusted to have an opportunity of witnessing the discomfiture of the penurious few who were always throwing doubts upon the utility of missions to the heathen, and predicting that future results among such would be no better than the past.

Seth Graham well knowing, from the nature of his

communication to his friends at home, that such announcement would be made to expectant congregations, was really mortified at the manner in which he felt himself jilted, as it were, just as he fancied himself almost certain of receiving the honors of a clerical triumph, and it sorely puzzled his inventive faculty to find a way out of the awkward position in which he had been placed by the desertion and evident apostasy of the Hindoo woman, who, he expected, would corroborate his assertions as to the necessity for missions to India, as to the increasing power of the gospel, and the extended influence of Christianity among those who were once worshipers of wood and stone; and he of course also expected that she would point to him before all as, in a manner, her spiritual deliverer from the demons of a cruel and debasing superstition.

That person is scarcely mortal who is entirely indifferent to praise from his fellow man, particularly when, in his own opinion, he has done something, little or much, to deserve it. Praise is an honorary reward suitable to persons of every degree; it is the sunshine in which the humble can bask as well as the exalted, and Mr. Graham, like most other ministers of the gospel, under the impression that his peculiar talents had advanced "the cause," had a yearning for popularity, and would like to be hailed in a well crowded church, or to stand uncovered before a fashionable assembly of wealthy Christians, and to receive their well earned plaudits. Many a night during his long voyage home, did this retiring missionary comfort himself with the idea of such a reception, even in his dreams he could often hear the congratulations of his friends, and at times in his night visions, he could see the beautiful faces and glowing smiles of the Christian ladies who seemed to flutter around him like celestial butterflies, while he in his humble pride sat perched like a bird of Paradise upon one of the highest branches of the towering cedars of Lebanon. And often, during the day, many an hour would be spent while he and his wife would converse about such pleasing probabilities in anticipation of an

agreeable reunion; for with the credentials which he had now in his possession, was it possible that he could expect any thing else than the most distinguished greeting?

But now, alas, what a change! Seth Graham sat aside by himself like one in despair, totally crest-fallen; he spoke but little to his wife or to any one else, while she, poor woman, tried to assure him by stating that perhaps the Hindoo lady might have had some reason to remain behind for a time, and that in all probability both she and her nephew would proceed after them to Ireland. Mrs. Graham recommended her husband to leave his address and to ask some pious friends in the neighborhood to keep a look out for the fugitives, and if they should be discovered to urge them to follow. The missionary had, however, but little hope; he had a strong impression that he had been grossly deceived, and that neither he nor his wife would ever again lay eyes on the absconding converts. He had intended to make a short stay in London, but under the present circumstances he thought it best to go on at once to Ireland, and in the meantime he would try and frame some excuse for the non-appearance of his Hindoo friends, and put the best face on the matter by making the most he could of the Parsee girl, Sheva.

Perplexed, however, as he had been, his reception in Belfast was after all most gratifying. It had been made known through certain Presbyterian journals and other Protestant papers, that the Rev. Seth Graham—they used the objectionable prefix, Reverend—the self-sacrificing missionary, was soon expected; that he had been obliged to leave India in consequence of impaired health; that during his stay in that oppressive climate, he had been unceasing in his arduous labors, and as a proof of his great success, would bring to his native country certain converted Pagans whom he had turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God. This report having been thoroughly circulated by pulpit and press, in less than a week after his arrival, an immense assemblage greeted him in one of the largest churches in Belfast. There

might not, perhaps, have been so many persons present on this great occasion had it not been well understood that Seth Graham would, in person, present to the people the Hindoo and the Parsee converts, who, it was said, had urgently solicited him to take them to his own country; and though for several days before the evening on which the exhibition was to take place, many of the ministers had been informed that the Hindoo woman had been obliged to remain for a time in England, and that only the Parsee girl would appear, yet this information was not made known to the public; it was considered an innocent stroke of policy to keep this to themselves, else the sight-seers might be disappointed and the want of this great attraction might bring them but a very meagre attendance, and the amount to be collected for future missionary operations might be scarcely more than enough to defray the expenses of the evening.*

For a day or two before the meeting Seth Graham and his wife did their best to make their Parsee convert, Sheva, understand what she was required to do and say on the coming occasion, and the girl being sufficiently intelligent, was not a little gratified at the important part which she was expected to sustain.

The evening came at last; the missionary platform was as usual occupied by several ministers and wealthy friends of the gospel, and the church was crowded with well dressed ladies, whose aid on such occasions is of singular potency. The secretary read the report. A very large sum had been collected during the past year, and though several extra expenses had been incurred, still the amount received had been a little more than sufficient to meet all demands; this was most gratifying, and reflected the greatest credit upon the Reverend managers. The greatest economy had, however, to be practised, the cause was

* A Methodist minister not long since in announcing from the pulpit that a missionary meeting would be held, stated—as an attraction—that certain very prominent and influential preachers would be present, when he well knew at the time that they could not attend.

one of the noblest—indeed the very noblest—in which man could be engaged. The conversion of the heathen was a charge left by the Great Ruler to Christian men, and God would hold his ministers responsible for the performance of this most important duty; and those members of the Church who had wealth at their disposal would be called to a dread account on the day of General Judgment if they selfishly withheld the means so particularly needed for Missions. It might be, and it had been alleged that there was both poverty and ignorance in their own country, but poverty could be borne; penury never yet jeopardized a man's soul—ignorance of God's Holy Word must result in eternal misery. It had been stated that Ireland was afflicted with Popery, and that the ignorance and servility resulting from it were fraught with danger to free institutions, and many believed it to be as great an evil to society in general as the most degrading superstition of India. These objections, now becoming so frequent, were really superficial; while being urged as having a basis of reason, they were simply side blows against foreign missions; but as long as God's ministers were aware of their vast responsibility they would never cease to urge Christian men to hold out the glorious Bible, that grand old beacon light, to the millions of human beings struggling in the black darkness of Paganism. Popery, though comparatively an evil, was not perhaps entirely fatal to all who had a sincere belief in its efficacy. The most eminent Protestant reformers had admitted that Romanism had some portion of truth; that while papists bowed to images, kissed relics, and worshiped the Virgin, they still worshiped the Son, the Savior of men, and that therefore those who had even a corrupt Christianity were better off than those who had no Christianity at all.*

* At a missionary meeting held at Toronto, Canada, in the "Metropolitan" Wesleyan church, January 6th, 1873, Rev. Dr. Punshon said: "He desired active sympathy for this Japanese mission. The missionary cause was the gauge of a church's health and vigor, and he could point in the direction of that distant land for their help as indicated almost by Divine intelligence. He had a warm regard for

After two or three ministers had reiterated the sentiments expressed in the report, Mr. Graham, in apparent good health, was received with cheers. The address which he had prepared gave the usual orthodox repetition of the condition of the heathen world, of their ignorance, their superstition, and their degradation. The Brahmins were said to be impostors, the Buddhists were illiterate, the Mohammedans fiendish, and the people generally ignorant, squalid, poverty stricken, and brutal. He had seen unfortunate widows forced to sacrifice themselves in the Suttee, had seen fanatics immolate themselves under the car wheels of Juggernaut, and had seen naked, raving fakirs almost tear the flesh from their very bones; the people on the whole were in a most deplorable condition; there was neither charity, nor chastity, nor scarcely human feeling among them, they were simply sensual and devilish; though many of them pretended an aversion to good beef, yet he feared that many others were little better than cannibals; and, were it not for British control, human life would be insecure; were it not for self-sacrificing missionaries, were it not for such resolute spirits as Carey, and Duff, and Ward, Satan would reign triumphant over the whole land. Dark, however, as this picture was, he assured them that the Gospel was doing wonders in India; thousands were casting aside their idols, and were now willing to serve the true God. He had hoped, he said, to be able to give them the assurances of adult persons who—he humbly said it—had been led to the truth by his instrumentality, but as the Hindoo lady and her nephew, who had accompanied him from India, had been obliged to remain for a time in England, he trusted to be able, on some future occasion, to induce her to tell them of her change of heart, and of what God's word had done for her

the Home missions and especially those for Lower Canada (for the conversion of French Catholics) but he held that they were better off who had a corrupt Christianity than those who had no Christianity at all." Strange that other Protestant ministers should assert Popery to be a more dangerous error than Paganism or even unbelief.

and hers. In conclusion, he urged them to be true to the great missionary cause, and not to forget the millions under condemnation of original sin, who were yet spiritually destitute, but to strengthen God's hand by sending out, at any cost, or at any sacrifice, zealous servants of the Lord to the perishing heathen.

Like most of the assertions made upon missionary platforms, there was, of course, some truth in the observations of Mr. Graham, and much exaggeration, which was really more telling upon the rather credulous assemblage than truth itself; and then to heighten the effect of what had been stated, a few idols and trinkets were exhibited, and after this the Parsee girl was smilingly led forward for the edification of all. Sheva was dressed in her native costume, she was decorated with a profusion of rings and jewelry, much of which was extraneous, added by Mrs. Graham, in her simple desire to produce an effect. The girl's appearance was graceful, and her manner innocent, and when she stood out before all, there was much pushing, and crowding, and stretching of necks, and she seemed somewhat abashed until Mr. Graham whispered a few words in her ear, and while he still held her hand, she spoke a few words in broken English—which she had been made to practice for the occasion :

“Me Christin friends, me little Parsee girl very glad to see you all. Me love you all in dis place in Irelan', an' in Englan' too. Me greatly love my good fader Grame, an' my good mudder Grame wid him too. Me love de Lor', an' you love de Lor' too. Me leave my friends an' my nice home to come here wid my good fader an' my good mudder Grame, me can't not stay without dem. I love de Lor', an' I love you all in my heart. Tink of my poor friends in Bombay, send dem de missoner, an' send dem de wor' of de Lor', too.”

After the delivery of this rehearsed prattle in a very hesitating manner, the girl made a low bow, and was led aside by her “good fader Grame,” while the audience, as if struck with wonder at this evidence of precocity so

evangelical, awarded her their warm and grateful applause.

It is sufficient to say that this meeting was considered a great success; a large sum had been collected to advance "the cause" in India, even to send a missionary in the place of Mr. Graham. He himself was in an excellent mood, and so highly favored was he, that in a few days after this missionary reception, he had the good fortune to be inducted as minister to a congregation in Belfast. Being still of a restless disposition, and grown rather more aggressive, simple preaching was not sufficient to satisfy his clerical longings for notoriety. Popery still raised its audacious head in his native land, and now again he thought that a temporizing government had not only tolerated this evil, but had actually sustained it and its Maynooth professors by public grants; that it was the duty of every loyal Protestant—especially of protestant ministers—to proclaim increasing hostility against everything Popish; and, as he had learned by experience, that it was almost useless to produce what he and many others deemed unanswerable texts and arguments, either against the man of sin, or against many of the prevailing theological errors, he believed that something more like muscular arguments were indispensable, and as Orangeism had a leaning in that direction, he became a member of that society, and was soon afterward elected a kind of district chaplain, and in his visits to sundry lodges, he caused much excitement and evoked a strong anti-Popish spirit at a time when the government was most anxious to suppress Orange celebrations, particularly in Ireland; and in defiance of proclamations, either from the Lord Lieutenant, or from the Queen herself, he continually urged the Orangemen to be true to their principles, and not be afraid of either Pope or devil, to turn out, one and all, and display their colors upon the ever glorious Twelfth.

CHAPTER XXII.

WAVERING FAITH.

WELL, on the day after the late Orange celebration, Seth Graham, weather bound like others, stood gloomily at his window, looking up occasionally at the Divis ridges now dimly visible in the leaden sky, and then at the lowering clouds; he was annoyed by the continuous rain, now streaming down, now lightening a little but to disappoint him again; he wished like others to get out and to have an opportunity of visiting some of his wounded friends, and like others perhaps to feast his eyes upon the blackened ruins of the Popish church.

His wife, a delicate looking little woman, sat near him, they had been conversing about the unhappy incidents of the Twelfth. She, of a gentle and humane disposition, had utterly disapproved of the bloodshed that had taken place, and of the destruction of the building. He, in evident angry mood, had justified all, and while he had been denouncing Romanism, and uttering the most uncharitable sentiments against that system, the Parsee girl, Sheva, who had been sitting half asleep on the carpet in the middle of the room, had listened to his loud words and seemed surprised at his vehemence. She looked from one to the other, now at Mrs. Graham's thin, pale face, now at Graham who with gloomy expression still looked out at the window; and she glanced at him from time to time as if partly afraid of her spiritual parent. He was a man of medium height, rather slightly built, his face was sallow,

his eyes dark and sunken, and his lank black hair, now touched with grey, was parted in the middle, giving him a kind of sanctimonious appearance. He was one whose religious zeal was an over match for his discretion, and like certain biblical heroes, he could ignore human impulses and commit an atrocious act were he under the impression that by so doing he was performing the Lord's work or serving His cause. As he had hitherto done little either among Catholics in Ireland or Hindoos in India, he now felt it his duty to re-commence an agitation against Popery. His opinions had greatly changed as to the method of procedure with false systems. About the time of his ordination he believed in argument and moral suasion, but now after his return and his long experience he was inclined to believe that where reason and argument were ineffective to crush down error, actual force if need be should be used. And though he was ready to preach against the Inquisition and Papal persecution, he would not hesitate to use any means—even the most violent—to undermine Popery and to prostrate the man of sin. The pure gospel he believed could and would do much, and faith alone could remove mountains. There was a time in his life when Seth Graham verily believed that prayer with faith was all that was necessary to accomplish anything—even to enable the believing Christian to perform actual miracles—to walk upon the water, to remove the mountains, or to raise the dead. He had known many sterling believers who would exultingly tell of the faith “of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephtha; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets,” and who at the same time believed that the promise was still for them, and that, even in these latter times, they could through faith, quench the violence of fire, escape the edge of the sword, and put to flight armies of aliens—but alas! in his long experience the reliance of Seth Graham had been somewhat shaken, for he had seen many of such who, while vainly hoping to the last, still “died in the faith, not having received the promises.”

It was to him, then, one of the most perplexing mysteries of theology why there should be promises so positive and yet so unreliable. Had he not prayed for the downfall of Popery, for the conversion of the heathen, and for the speedy and general spread of the gospel—all as it seemed to little purpose. Popery, he admitted, appeared to be sinking under the weight of its own infamy, but as for the real and permanent conversion of Pagans, notwithstanding all that had been done he had but little hopes; and though he still believed in the efficacy of frequent prayer, and had still some trust in gospel promises, he was verily of opinion that other means were necessary, and in order to remove the mountain, faith must be aided by some lever more powerful than an ordinary invocation. These were his own private views which it would never, never answer to publish to the world. Esoteric opinions so dangerous might be whispered only to certain of the initiated; he was cautious enough to breathe them only to his wife.

“I tell you what, Anne,” he continued, addressing Mrs. Graham, “forbearance may be a virtue, but after one exhausts every text in the Bible against Popery, and finds it to little purpose, I believe in taking other means. I don’t regret the killing off of a score or two of Papists should it serve as an example—they were the aggressors. I don’t care for the destruction of their Mass House if it is likely to effect any good; and I wouldn’t care a straw if, before the next Twelfth of July, every Popish temple in the kingdom was tumbled to the ground. That’s the right way to deal with false systems. Psha! for prayer and moral force with such glaring frauds on Christianity! Naked heathenism is nearer the truth.”*

“But that’s not the scriptural way, Seth, to deal with error,” said his wife in a tone of mild reproof.

“Yes, yes, the scriptural way, the true Bible method,” retorted Mr. Graham. “The only way to eradicate evil sometimes is to destroy it root and branch.”

* See Note 12.

"I doubt it, Seth, I doubt it; God would be more merciful," again urged Mrs. Graham.

"Would He? Through the mouth of Moses did not the Lord God say to idolators: 'They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischief upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. *They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction. I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of grey hairs.*'* There's scripture for you, wife. What can you say to that?"

"If it is, Seth," said Mrs. Graham after a little reflection, "the Lord is patient and long suffering. It is not His pleasure to destroy."

"Is it not?" said Mr. Graham sharply. "Let us see. How did he treat the rebellious under Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? 'The earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up. And there came out a fire from the Lord and consumed two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.'† And those of the congregation that afterwards murmured against Moses for this dispensation were cut off at once by a plague to the number of fourteen thousand and seven hundred."‡ He paused for a moment, but his wife made no reply. "And further," continued he, "did not the Lord order the destruction of the Midianites? Hear the word: 'And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites. And they warred against the Midianites as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And they slew the

* Deuteronomy, Chap. 32, v. 21 to 25.

† Numbers, Chap. 16, v. 32 and 35.

‡ Numbers, Chap. 16, 49.

kings of Midian, besides the rest of them that were slain; namely Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword. And the children of Israel took *all* the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt and all their goodly castles, with fire.' This, Anne, was the Lord's method of retaliation; even afterwards when the conquerors returned to the presence of Moses he asked them: "Have ye saved all the women alive?" and being of course answered in the affirmative, what was the further command? 'Now, therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women-children that have not known a man, by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.'* There, Anne, that's scripture also, and none can deny it, and if, to a limited extent, following the example of the select children of God, we had destroyed in self-defence a score or so of idolatrous papists, and burnt one of their strongholds, I ask if we have not sufficient authority for cutting off the enemies of the Lord and of his people?"

After another pause Mrs. Graham slowly replied: "Yet I would in these days let the Lord, if He so wills, be His own avenger."

"In these days?" sharply replied Mr. Graham, who seemed to grow more determined. "All time is alike to the Lord; He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, without variableness or shadow of turning, and what He did in olden time He will do again. He cared not to show relenting pity to transgressors—He gave them the full measure of justice. His command is positive: 'And thine eye shall not pity, *but* life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.'

* Numbers, Chap. 31 to v. 13.

† Deuter. Chap. 19, v. 21.

ands slaughtered under Moses, and Aaron, and Joshua, besides those under David and Solomon, and others of his pious servants, were cut off as a necessity. The Lord knew best how to deal with His enemies when He commanded 'But thou shalt utterly destroy them, namely, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.*' Terrible as the unsanctified declare these mandates, the Lord well knew that showing mercy to enemies is often the grossest injustice towards friends."

Poor Mrs. Graham listened in silence, she made no reply, she dared not exclaim against the dreadful quotations she had just heard; she dared not murmur against the very words of inspiration. Though the record seemed inhuman, she would fain believe that the Lord was after all of more tender mercy and compassion than even the word itself had made Him. And struggling between her humanity and her creed—between her benevolent impulses and her rigid faith—she could have wept that those unfortunately in error and unbelief, were still under the curses of the law and doomed to an eternity of misery.

Mr. Graham, noticing her depression, continued in a milder tone:

"I tell you what, Anne, these denunciations may seem hard, but are not the words of the Lord as wise as they are inscrutable? If the heart becomes like adamant, it must be broken by heavy strokes; if line upon line, and precept upon precept remain unheeded, other means must be used to overthrow error. It has been so from the beginning, and will be so to the end of time. Why, one might have preached for an eternity in India, and the Suttee would still remain an established usage, were it not for the penalties of a prohibitory law; and here in Ireland we may scatter Bibles and tracts by the thousand, and the abominations of Popery will continue unless true

* Deuter., Chap. 20, v. 17.

believers, and loyal men, rise in their might and crush them under foot."

During most of this conversation, Sheva remained sitting on the carpet, and her large, lustrous eyes seemed occasionally to grow larger while hearing a rehearsal of barbarities such as shocked her naturally tender feelings. For Mrs. Graham, she had a warm affection, but the cold, harsh, stern manner of Mr. Graham caused her to feel at times a dread of his presence; for lately he had grown indifferent toward the little foreigner, and his treatment of her was sometimes more than unkind, as if she had become a useless burden. Whatever means had been taken to induce Sheva to leave her home, the girl now appeared to have discovered that she had done very wrong, and at times she cried bitterly for her parents, uttering their names in the most affectionate manner, and pleading to be taken home again. While she had the companionship of the Hindoo boy, Hemar, to whom she was much attached, she did not complain so often, but since the disappearance of him and his aunt, she had become more discontented, and were it not for the motherly kindness of Mrs. Graham, she would have been very unhappy. Even as it was, the minister's wife regretted the part she had once conscientiously taken in aiding to induce Sheva to leave her native country, and were an opportunity to offer, she would now have willingly made a sacrifice to send her back.

After Mr. Graham had ceased to quote any further Scriptural denunciations against the so-called enemies of the Lord, Mrs. Graham, who had noticed Sheva's disquietude, took her hand and led her out of the room into another apartment. Sheva had a little room to herself, up stairs, and there she and Mrs. Graham often sat together. Mrs. Graham, who took an interest in trying to explain the Scriptures to her young charge, often found it difficult to satisfy her curious inquiries on theological subjects. The Parsee girl was very shrewd and intelligent for her age, and though inclined to confide much in

what Mrs. Graham might tell her, she was still very critical, and often expressed her dissatisfaction with the explanation which she had heard offered. Mrs. Graham sat down, and Sheva, being close to her, as usual, said, after a few moments' thought,

"O, ma, how can I love your God any longer, how can I, after all father has just said; isn't He a very cruel God?"

"My dear," said Mrs. Graham, rather surprised, "you must not speak that way, God is very good, very good indeed. It would be terrible not to love God."

"No, ma, He is not good," continued Sheva, "for if He was good, He would not kill so many poor people, and He would not kill poor little children, and little girls, and burn der houses; I could not love you at all, if you were as bad as your God is."

"Dear child, dear child," said Mrs. Graham, "do not say that, for if you do, God will be very angry, and punish you severely."

"Why should He be angry with me?" said Sheva, "it seems to me dat He is angry all de time. I never did God any harm. Your God is bad, for He won't forgive wicked people, but burn dem up for ever, and ever, and ever; I could not be as bad as dat, you could not, for I'm sure you could forgive dem sometime—sooner, you know, dan de long forever."

"O! Sheva, Sheva," said the almost alarmed Mrs. Graham, "do not speak so; God is worthy of all your love, and of my love; He is better than any one; no matter what He does, it is all for the best."

"Ma," replied Sheva, "you know it is not for de best to burn poor people down in dat bad place, called hell, that Christians talk so much about. I heard some Christian ladies say dat dere would be no good people in de world only for hell; and dat God made dat horrid place. Well, I don't want to be a Christian any longer; some Christians are not like you, ma, but are very bad people."

"Not a Christian, Sheva!" said Mrs. Graham, still

more alarmed, "not a Christian! O Sheva, Sheva, unless you are a Christian, you can never get to heaven."

"If dey was all like you, ma," said Sheva, "I might remain a Christian, but you know Christians are very, very wicked, not so good as Parsees or Hindoos, and I don't tink dat your God is as good as de great Ormuzd. Christians fight, and get drunk, and steal, and kill one anoder like dey did yesterday. If Christians was as good as Parsees, dere would not be so many beggars in de streets, and so many poor hungry people going about who have no houses of der own; and so many little girls and boys, not so big as I am, going about in rags, who have no friends to get dem anything to eat. O, ma, I do pity dese poor little Christians, but it seems to me dat de rich Christian ladies, who come to our church, with such fine clothes, don't care for dese little ones. If none but Christians can get to heaven, I don't want to go dere—it must be a very wicked place."

"Sheva," said Mrs. Graham, more seriously, "you are really wicked to talk that way. Heaven is a beautiful place, where God lives with all His angels and saints, and with all the good Christian people that have ever lived, Heaven is God's great throne, surrounded by the blest and the redeemed of all nations and tribes. Neither wicked people nor idolators can ever enter that blissful abode. O Sheva, you must never again be a Parsee, they are idolators, and worship wood and stone; it would be better to be the poorest Christian beggar, for such get to heaven where their sorrows are ended and where their tears are dried forever."

"No, ma," replied Sheva, solemnly, "the Parsees do not worship idols, dey bow to de sun, dat gives us light, and to fire. My own pa, in Bombay, never told me to bow to an idol or an image. Fader Grame has what he says are Hindoo idols, but if Christians are not idolators, what is dis?" The girl quickly placed a large family Bible on the floor, and she stood upon the book to enable her to reach a crucifix which Mr. Graham had brought with him

as a kind of trophy from the south of Ireland. The wood was black ebony, and the image pure silver: "and here, too, is an image of the Virgin and child, and here is a picture of a saint, and here is a bottle of holy ——"

"Sheva, Sheva, for shame," said Mrs. Graham, hurriedly pushing the girl aside, "for shame, see what you've done! Why do you stand on the Bible, God's Holy Word?" Mrs. Graham raised the large book reverently; her face was slightly flushed with anger, and poor Sheva stood abashed—she scarcely understood the nature of her offence. "See," continued Mrs. Graham, "this is the Holy Bible that you have been standing on—a thing you should never have done. But then, child," said she, calming down to her usual mild way, "you scarcely knew the difference; yet remember for the future, that this is our Sacred Book, which should be ever treated with the most profound respect—it is God's revealed will to fallen man, of priceless value. But, Sheva, those things that you call Christian idols, are Popish, which some Catholics almost worship; and, my dear, remember also, that Catholics are not true Christians—they are little better than idolators."

The Parsee girl was sorely puzzled; she had heard Mr. Graham say, time after time, that Catholics were idolators, that the Protestant State Church was a fraud, and that Baptists, and Methodists, and others were semi-Popish and unscriptural; and hearing these sayings often repeated, she, as yet, did not understand what true Christianity really was. Poor Sheva, wishing, however, to make some amends for her mistake, rubbed the cover of the large book with a cloth, she then carefully opened it, and on the leaf opposite to the title-page there was displayed a fine engraving of the crucifixion in the same Protestant Bible. Sheva had not seen it before, and Mrs. Graham, who stood at her side, seemed a little confused at the discovery. It then flashed upon the mind of the girl that this great book must be some kind of a Protestant idol, and though she made no remark, she wondered

why the picture of an object of Catholic worship should be permitted to adorn its pages.

The clouds had at last disappeared, and the evening sun shone into the little room, there was a lulling sound from the busy town, and Mrs. Graham, in this quiet time, sat dozing in an arm chair. Sheva, from the ivied window, looked beyond the brightened summit of Cave Hill, and out upon the golden sea, and beyond the ocean leagues that separated her from India, and from those she loved. Child as she was in a strange land, the most touching memories led her again to her distant home, she saw her forlorn parents, and in the very fulness of her heart she wept aloud.

Mrs. Graham started up. "Why, you're weeping again, poor child," said the affectionate woman, with eyes already suffused. "May God comfort you!"

"O, ma," said Sheva, throwing herself into her arms, "take me home, won't you take me home? Shall I never see them again? My poor mother is weeping; my father is sorrowful; oh take me home, take me home, good ma, or I shall soon die here!"

"Stay, child," said Mrs. Graham, hurriedly, "here is a carriage driving up to the house." Mr. Graham also saw it from the lower room. Sheva, on looking out again, saw a gentleman step down from the vehicle and approach the door; she had a glance at the person, and thrust her head out still farther. In a moment or two afterward, she sprung into the middle of the room, her large eyes had a strange light, she gave a kind of scream, as she rushed down stairs, and, just as the stranger entered, she knelt before him, and clutched his knees, and, without uttering a word, she looked up with pleading, streaming eyes into the benevolent face of John Valiant.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN ERRING SHEPHERD.

THE Summer moonbeams appeared to slumber upon Pendell Bay, and the stars seemed to be listlessly gazing down upon the bosom of the tranquil deep, in which they were now but faintly reflected. The lighthouse was like a misty spectre upon the shining waters, and might remain unperceived were it not for its occasional flash, which was, however, almost eclipsed by a moonlight nearly as bright as day. The distant mountain looked like a pearly cloud; and the island and the ships, now dimly seen far out, appeared to be like luminous spirit forms at rest in some haven of glory. Even the very air was in repose; and the ripples that played along the gravelly shore were now scarcely audible.

The scene was calmly beautiful, one in which the lover of nature might truly delight; one upon which those who had been for years tossed about by the storms of life, might look with longing eyes, as if obtaining at last a glimpse of the promised, peaceful hereafter. It was a soft picture of earthly quietude which might easily lead the fanciful invalid to dream of heaven, or the pious hopeful sufferer, to speculate upon the sublime and glorious scenery of the land of the blest. And, at that mystic time, one indeed might have readily imagined that Night had stepped down from her "ebon throne," eager to be transformed into Day, and that she had already donned the fragrant spangled robe of Dawn.

It is said that natural scenery, either calm, beautiful, or grand, would be entirely without value, were there no appreciative observer. The moon-lit lake, the shaded vale, the towering mountain, and the ocean tempest, incapable of thought in themselves, still generate the most sublime ideas in the mind of a spectator; and unless there were some mirror of intelligence in which these could be reflected, the world might as well be one vast waste, or the earth might still remain in its alleged original state, "without form and void."

But there was one observer this night that had looked, time after time, upon Pendell Bay in calm and in storm—one who could enjoy the quiet moonlight scenery, and the placid surface of the deep, or hear with ecstasy the roar of the storm, or look with fearless eye upon the maddened waves, as they thundered wildly against the rocky coast. Esther Meade, seated upon an elevated spot, had a fine view of the spacious bay, but even at that witching hour, she seemed to pay but little heed to the attractive picture; her mind was so pre-occupied, that she gazed as if entirely indifferent to all but one diminutive point upon the horizon. This night she had visited the ancient church with her faithful attendant, old Stephen, and had spent over an hour at her favorite relaxation on the organ, and after she had separated from him, she wandered alone, as usual, to her chosen retreat by the sea.

It was a time for quiet thought or for deeper meditation and Miss Meade now seemed to ponder upon some subject thoroughly engrossing. Occasionally as she gazed out, her look would seem troubled and a stern expression would mark her features. One might think that her quiet and retired manner of life should leave her tolerably free from care, but under a calm exterior she had an active mind. She often thought of her father's circumstances, of her brother in a foreign land, and very often of her own future. She well knew that the humble stipend which her father received for his services, with the small amount which she was enabled to earn, was scarcely more than

sufficient to keep up that appearance of respectability which their position required; she knew that in a few years her father would fail through age, and be rendered unable to perform the required duties of parish curate; and then she thought of the sad possibility of his death, or of his dismissal by the mere whim of an exacting rector—the Rector! She now thought of the man with increasing distrust, with positive dislike, which, on her father's account, she was forced to hide. She had sufficient reason to distrust his seeming regard for her father, and sufficient evidence to suspect the attentions which he was forward enough to pay to herself. There was a time when this very rector cared not to pay a pastoral visit to Pendell for months together; but now, though a pluralist, he had neglected his other parishes and devoted nearly all his spare time to this retired place. He had lately visited this favored spot about once in two weeks, to the surprise of many; and when he did come, he usually sought the society of Miss Meade, paid her many compliments, and even made use of certain tender expressions, which were too significant to be misunderstood, and which, more than once, caused the flush of anger to become plainly visible upon her face. But what could she do under the circumstances? For her father's sake, she was obliged to dissemble—an act most repugnant to her nature. Were she to insult this reverend divine, this man in ecclesiastical authority, from whom her aged parent gained his living, her father might be cast upon an uncharitable world in his old age, and they might be obliged to leave their pleasant, peaceful home together. She had to dissemble! O! what would she not have given to be able to exhibit that contempt for this rector which he deserved! It was a desperate struggle for her to appear unmoved in his presence. There were moments when she was afraid of betraying herself and upbraiding him before her father; there were times when she could scarcely keep from reproaching him even in church before the whole congregation. In violence to her feelings, but in compliance with

the urgent request of her father, she had once accepted an invitation from the rector's wife, and had spent over a week in London, in the rector's grand house; had submitted to the patronizing airs of this condescending woman, had listened to the pretty inanities of the rector himself, and had at last been obliged to accept the handsome workbox which he had purchased for her. Even at that time she had her suspicions of him; his easy plausibility might have deceived some, but she understood him at once; and though he had often spoken of her father as one for whom he entertained the greatest regard, and had expressed his intention of making the curacy of Pendell more serviceable to its estimable curate than it ever had been, yet as time passed, she became more confirmed in the belief that the Rev. George Morton was a heartless, treacherous man; and though the calm moonbeams were still before her, she saw in the future the portentous storm cloud that was likely to burst over the unprotected head of her father.

As the rector's visits seemed now to be regularly expected, Miss Meade often sought excuses to go from home during his stay. Though she wished to avoid him, she found the task very difficult, for were she anywhere in the neighborhood, he would be sure to make some excuse in order to find her out, and when he failed to succeed, which was, indeed, seldom, he became irritated and prolonged his stay, determined to meet her, and sometimes to venture a mild reproach for her indifference. Some began to think that he had grown tired of the wild bustle of London, and that he might possibly make his home at Pendell. He had now his own rooms at the hotel; he did not choose to lodge at a private house, but was ready to accept an invitation to dine with Mr. Meade—the providing of a suitable dinner for the rector was a severe tax upon the curate's resources—or with such of his parishioners as would afford him an opportunity of meeting the curate and his daughter. He sometimes rode to Betnall to dine with Mr. Rockett, his brother rector, but this was mostly when he was on

his way back to London; his Sabbaths were generally spent in the city.

He had, however, lately been absent from Pendell longer than usual, and Miss Meade had begun to entertain some hopes that they would not be troubled with him so often. During the rector's last visit, she had managed to keep entirely out of his way, and he had, she hoped, probably begun to think that his visits at his Pendell parish were suspected by her father, as well as by herself; though if her father ever had a thought on the subject, he kept it to himself, as he did many other troublesome matters. Any way, these hopes were quickly disappointed, for Mr. Morton had unexpectedly arrived that evening; and striving to avoid him if possible, she had stolen away from the parsonage at an early hour, and went to spend a while with old Sarah Afton; then, when it was growing late, she left Sarah's cottage, and went to the church with old Stephen, and having indulged for some time upon her favorite instrument, was now alone gazing vacantly upon the moon-lit scene before her.

But not altogether did this disagreeable subject concerning the rector, occupy the mind of Esther Meade, other matters of a more pleasing nature engaged her. She had heard much of the wonderful improvements lately made upon the Heath property; she was surprised at the almost miraculous change in the manners and habits of the once wild set who had infested the place, and equally surprised to learn of their present orderly and contented disposition; she had heard of the intended restoration of the Manor House, and of nearly all that its humane proprietor had done and proposed to do, and she had heard her father, and old Stephen, and Sarah, and in fact every one that knew him, not only mention the name of John Valiant with the greatest respect, but speak of him as being one of the noblest individuals living. Under the impression that there might possibly be some exaggeration in their favorable accounts, she had determined to satisfy herself, and had asked old Stephen to drive her

down to the Heath to see what had really been done, and she had returned pleased and delighted at the change.

Strange to say that though Mr. Valiant had been at Pendell and in its neighborhood several times, she had never yet seen him. He had once called at the parsonage but she was then absent on a visit at the rector's in London. She had often turned her eyes when at church expecting to see him enter, but he never came; and as yet neither at church nor anywhere else had she met him, and having heard so much in his favor from rich and from poor, especially from those who were considered the most destitute, she was really desirous of becoming acquainted with a person so estimable; with one who though wealthy was neither purse-proud, nor ostentatious, nor indifferent to the necessities of others.

Miss Meade having a great regard for unselfish people, could not avoid drawing a comparison between the Rev. George Morton, the rich rector of Pendell, with his three livings, which paid him nearly four thousand pounds a year, clear of all salaries to his curates, and this stranger whose wealth had already been a fountain of benevolence to those in need. She well knew that the name of the rector of Pendell, as well as that of Mr. Rockett, the rector of Betnall, had been despised by almost all upon the Heath. These clergymen, with little sympathy for distress and less charity for the destitute, were even now anything but favorites, the rector of Betnall still being especially detested; indeed at one period his life would be counted as of little value were he discovered alone in that region. As ministers of the Established Church—the true church to her—they had only brought religion into contempt. And then she began to wonder why it was that that Church with its immense wealth, with its vast endowments, with its titled bishops, its numerous clergy, and its influential adherents, could have allowed such a place of infamy as the Heath once was, to exist in England. From her childhood she had heard of the depredations of the reckless people of the Heath, she had heard of their poverty and

of their crime, and of the efforts which a few benevolent people had occasionally made to benefit them; but these efforts had for some reason been of little or no service. She had read books and reports on the state of the heathen world, and had read heart rending accounts of the labors and sufferings of missionaries in distant lands, and of the triumphant successes with which they had been ultimately crowned; and, years ago, she had many a time wondered why men, said to be so truly devoted had not gone among the half-starved heathen of the Heath for the purpose of winning souls, instead of going thousands of miles away to try and gain converts among the well-fed heathens of Hindoostan. She had reasonably thought, that if obdurate pagans in India could be humanized and Christianized, that a few score of British heathen, only half a day's journey from St. Paul's Church in London, might also be reclaimed. She knew that there were various missionary societies throughout England; she knew that her own church had annually collected vast sums in order that the gospel might be sent to pagans afar off, even while the unfortunates on the Heath, as well as a similar class in other parts of England, were almost totally neglected and forgotten. For years she had heard, through pulpit and through press, of the great endeavors of the Christian Church to make known the plan of salvation to unbelievers, and through those long years she and her poor father had known of those suffering people on the Heath, and had many a time made appeals for them to wealthy Christians, but she had learned from long experience that so long as India, and China, and Japan, and the South Sea Islands, stood in the way, and loomed up before imaginative missionaries, little need be expected for those socially and morally degraded at home. But what a change during the last few months! Here was a people long trodden under foot, long despised, long said to be too vicious ever to be reclaimed by ordinary methods now so changed and improved as scarcely to be recognized, and this, too, all the work of one benevolent man, without

the aid or endorsement of any great missionary society, without the assistance of one "duly authorized," save by those whom he himself had raised as it were from the coarse clay, into whom he had breathed human ideas, and to whom in due time he had given his own special ordination.

But what had the clergy of her church, as a body, ever done for the perishing British heathen? She might have answered: Absolutely nothing! She had been informed of the visit of the Bishop of Storkchester to the Heath—of this his first missionary attempt—of his altercation with the old gypsy woman, and of this worse than useless clerical excursion of his Right Reverence, his Lordship, his chaplains, and the other clergy. She had heard of Zingari's strange predictions, but had treated them as the absurd threats or warnings of the professed fortune teller of wandering tribes; that which her father had, however, related as to what he had seen in the little mirror—the likeness of her brother—held before him by the old gypsy woman, caused her no little surprise. She was by no means what is commonly understood as superstitious; no believer in spiritual quackery, but she well knew that her father was neither credulous nor easily deceived, and that he would for no consideration make such a statement to her, or to any one else, if he did not believe in what he had seen; as it was he seemed reluctant to mention the circumstance, but as the renown of the visit of the clergy and of what had taken place, had reached her through other sources, she had prevailed upon her father to give her a more particular account of what had occurred.

While dwelling upon this singular circumstance, and wondering by what means, natural or unnatural, the features of her brother, as well as those of other persons had been produced in Zingari's mirror, she was startled by the appearance of the long shadow of a human form which gradually approached from behind. She turned quickly around, and there stood the dark figure of a man, as if hesitating to take another step towards her; his features

were visible, and though there was a smile to be seen on them, it was ghastly in the moonlight. She knew the person and her first impulse was to rush past him and speed home, but her pride and self-confidence held her to the spot, and without an exclamation, or a single word, she stood up and looked sternly at the intruder; she had little fear at the moment.

"Ah! fair truant, you have not escaped me this time! I would have traced you ten times as far; and here you are alone by the sea, or rather we are here alone, just as I would have it. Oh fair queen! verily you look like one at present. I can scarcely find words to utter a reproach, but, pretty wanderer, I ought to find fault with you; how seldom I have found an opportunity of expressing my admiration for the loveliest of her sex; one to me more beautiful than that picture of serenity around us would be to the eye of a poet."

The Rev. George Morton then raised his hat, made a profound bow, and stepped closer to Esther Meade, whom he had thus addressed.

"You are the rector of Pendell," said she, standing before him, "I am the curate's daughter. We are here alone, and you would take advantage of that circumstance to address me in manner as you have. I shall take advantage of this same to speak freely for once and tell you, that though you do not deceive me, you impose upon yourself when you fancy that I can regard your words as other than offensive."

"Offensive? Great Heavens! Offend you? No, not for a thousand worlds," replied the persistent rector. "Only tell me, fair tormentor, how, or where, I can unburden my heart—a heart that has long been yours—so that my ardent words, without provoking your gentlest anger may make even a faint impression on her who hears me."

Miss Meade, curbing her resentful feelings, looked steadily at him a moment, and then replied:

"How or where unburden your heart, did you say? By

leaving my presence, and by letting your wife hear that which you would have reach my ears; she has a right to listen; she has the best right to know to whom your heart belongs, and I would fain learn from her the impression which your words had produced."

"Bah!" exclaimed the rector smartly, "That's beside the matter; I keep such secrets from her, and from all others," and then he continued in a softer tone, "I cannot leave your presence. O, sweet Esther! were my wife to know my feelings for you she would hate you forever."

"Not if she knew my opinion of you," said Miss Meade calmly. "Not if she knew that I might entertain some respect for you were I certain of your hatred instead of a different feeling."

"Cruel, cruel! Cruel of you!" continued the rector. "Hate you? Impossible! I could hate her, I could hate all else for your sake, Esther. For you I could make any sacrifice—home, wife, children, friends, reputation, everything."

"I require no sacrifices," said she. "Yes, I ask a favor—a sacrifice if you will—leave me, and never dare to address me again as you have done. You have presumed too far; I have suffered long without complaint because I did not wish to give another care to my father, but now I tell you that from this time, no matter what the result may be, the annoyance must cease." Miss Meade spoke with great determination, her eyes told her meaning as she stood before him, and the Rev. rector though he winced a little was by no means subdued.

"Sweet creature, dream not of annoyance from me," said the rector, "I could make any sacrifice for your sake—but leave you I can't. I feel, even after all you have said, that you will yet relent and bear with my importunity. Though I regard your father for his worth, and venerate him still more for your sake, yet you may believe that it is solely on your account that I retain him as curate of Pendell, for you must be aware that he is at present,

and has been for some time, unable to perform all his required duties."

The color that now mounted to the cheek of Miss Meade could not be seen in the pale light. Her indignation was aroused by the man's persistency, and at the implied threat of her father's dismissal. The rector felt really surprised at her manner; he felt that he had been too urgent, or perhaps too precipitate. He stepped back a pace or two, but it was to admire her more fully, for Esther, with her clenched hands, and compressed lips, and fierce expression, had at the time the aspect of a stern but beautiful goddess.

For a moment or two not a word was spoken; she struggling to restrain her emotion, he as if enraptured with her appearance. Presently, as if anxious to conciliate, he made an humble obeisance and advanced towards her.

"Pardon! I most humbly ask pardon. If anything I have said has led you for a moment to suppose that I have not the proper regard for your feelings, pray let me explain my words; if they have offended, let me, sweet angel, give evidence of my contrition."

"*You* ask for pardon! You care as little for my pardon as you do for my feelings. Why dare intrude or follow me here? asked she, still boldly looking him in the face. Your words are insulting, and your threat contemptible as you are yourself. You, a clergyman! What a mockery! *You*, my father's employer! What a degrading service! Better that we should starve! Would that there were a thousand now present to hear me tell you that your conduct is a disgrace to your profession!"

These cutting words were keenly felt by the rector—doubly cutting because they came from her, yet he endeavored to appear unmoved as if he had not understood her meaning. He now began to feel that the scornful beauty whom he would win, was not one to be easily imposed upon; and that she must be approached in a different way, and he at once affected a desire to gain her good opinion, even were he obliged to leave her forever.

"Ah!" said he, with downcast look, "perhaps I deserve your reproaches, but not to the extent you have gone. You misjudge me. For years I have kept aloof; for years I have taken the most delicate methods of hinting or of showing my regard for you—an unfortunate attachment, alas, for me; for years I have waited for an opportunity of explaining my position and making an appeal. In a word, without you, my life must be unhappy. Is there no hope?" Then he knelt and seized her hand, and endeavored to cover it with kisses. "O Esther," as we are now here alone, I ask, is there to be no hope? I am peculiarly situated, if I can have no claim on your consideration, tell me what is to be my doom. I shall hold your dear hand until you speak some word of encouragement, even for the distant future."

While Miss Meade was struggling to disengage her hand, a strange voice from a little distance was heard to say: "Not quite alone, your Reverence, not quite alone as you imagine; what a pity that your mission here has been such a failure! Fair lady, if you cannot give a more favorable reply to his gallant speeches, or if you cannot trust your tongue to bid him hope, or to tell his doom, shall I again pronounce it for him?"

The rector was thoroughly startled; Esther looked quickly around her. In front of a large furze bush, that was sufficient to hide a person from view, stood the ghost-like form of Zingari, looking toward the sea. Her right arm was partly outstretched; her withered face wore a solemn expression, and the moonlight, that was mingled with her snow-white hair, seemed like a halo around the head of a prophetess. Though many might have been alarmed at the time—for the hour was late, and the place lonely—yet Miss Meade felt a measure of relief in the presence of a third person, and she advanced with confidence toward the old gypsy woman. She then turned to address and rebuke the rector, she hoped for the last time, but when she looked at the spot where she had left him kneeling, she found that he had suddenly disappeared.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ZINGARI.

L EFT alone, as they now were, at an hour not far from midnight, Zingari stood motionless for some time; she seemed as if intent on watching the retiring form of the rector, and to strain her eyes, as if to still keep him in view. Her companion, who had better vision, and who was no doubt anxious to be assured of the departure of Mr. Morton, could see nothing of him, and it might have been only imagination on the part of the old gypsy woman to think that he was then visible. Miss Meade was under the impression that the rector must have suddenly sprung down from the high bank, in order to run along the circuitous shore, thereby to reach the village and escape further observation. Once or twice the old woman placed her hand behind her ear, as if endeavoring to catch the sound of his retiring footsteps, and as soon as she seemed satisfied that he had gone away, she gave a heavy sigh, and without speaking a word, took Esther by the hand, and led her slowly forward to the grassy elevation which commanded the most extensive view of the Bay that could be found in this retired place. A few dark clumps of gorse were scattered here and there, and having seated herself upon a projecting rock, she motioned Miss Meade to take a place beside her; and then, as if musing upon the beautiful scene before them, or dwelling upon some sad recollection of other years, she continued still silent until her wierd and now dejected appearance had at last

inclined her companion to speak: "Poor woman, you look as if you were troubled."

There was another pause, and then Zingari slowly replied with a sigh: "Alas! what has my poor life been—my almost dreary existence—but one continued scene of care, one wild, sad sea of trouble. There was for me a short period of happiness—ah, how short!—in my early days, which was as calm and bright as that scene before you; but oh heavens, how soon came the deep and constant gloom."

The poor woman seemed much depressed, her manner was subdued, and now she drew her hand across her eyes, which were full of tears.

"It would be a black month that had not more than one day of sunshine," said Esther, feelingly, "I trust that your remaining years may bring you peace."

"Peace, eternal peace, the oblivion of the tomb—that must come," replied Zingari, "but what peace can I expect again, for there are some whom I can never forgive, there are some whose vileness has brought me sorrow, and some whose wrongs I should avenge. I can only expect peace in the grave."

"Avenge! rather forget. Ah, what of the promised peaceful hereafter, if we cannot forgive?" asked Miss Meade.

"The hereafter?" said Zingari, "that may be but a dream—I often think so—better oblivion, better *nirvanna** than even a broken sleep of life with a dream of misery."

"There is a future—it is not a mere dream—a blest state of happiness for those who can forgive," said Miss Meade. "It is the duty of all to be like our Heavenly Father, to follow His example and forgive—to forgive even those who have done us the most injury."

"Ah! child," replied Zingari, "what a dreamer you now are! Were you, like others, impelled to follow the example of your so-called Heavenly Father, you would

* Buddhistic annihilation.

often be untrue to your own nature, would be inconsistent—at times greatly humane—but most often violently atrocious. Does not your own sacred book plainly record numerous instances of how the Great Being, of whom you speak, burned with revenge, and not only slaughtered the guilty, but the innocent; not only visited male offenders with fire and sword, disease and horrid tortures, but harassed unoffending women and harmless children with fierce wrath and dire persecution. And shall we mortals be more humane than your God; can we be more forgiving than the Divinity? ”

After a little hesitation, Esther replied: “We cannot in any manner presume to be equal to the Deity in all that is benevolent and merciful. Those whom God found it necessary to destroy, were cut off, no doubt, as a warning to others; He should have power over the lives he created.”

“And if you follow up this mode of argument,” resumed Zingari, “if you can so readily find an excuse for cruelty, you will, like fanatical theologians, only prove your Deity like to a fiend—an irate, malicious monster gloating in vengeance.” *

“Shocking!” exclaimed Miss Meade.

“It is even so,” said Zingari. “By reading your Scriptures, you can come to no other conclusion than that the Jewish Deity—now the Christian God—was like an insatiable fury, jealous and revengeful, ever ready to take offence; not punishing his creatures as a father would his children, but upon the merest pretext, involving all in one common destruction.”

“These instances,” replied Miss Meade, who felt some-

* Bagster, the great commentator, makes the following extraordinary plea for Jehovah, with regard to the slaughter of male “little ones,” as recorded in Numbers, Chap. 31, v. 17. “With respect to the execution of male infants, who cannot be supposed to have been guilty, God, the author and supporter of life, who has a right to dispose of it *when* and *how* He thinks proper, commanded it: and ‘shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?’ Amazing vindication of cruelty!”

what embarrassed, "were but rare exceptions for a useful purpose; a few were cut off, that many might be saved. Our God is a forgiving God."

"Such exceptions," said Zingari, "are too numerous to serve humanity, or to excite a true veneration for Jehovah; the exceptions might, indeed, be called His rule. You would have me think that your God is one that will easily relent, and yet there is a sin, a so-called blasphemy, that He will never, never forgive."

"My good friend," said Miss Meade, "it is evident that you are but partially informed; were you to study our Scriptures carefully, you would find that the Good Being whom we worship, is in Himself perfection."

"Child," replied Zingari, "you are like others of your creed, positive and assuming. You fancy that your book only requires to be read in order to produce conviction and belief. I read that book before you were born; read it to prove to my own satisfaction that it is but a corrupt version of the Sacred Vedas; partly but a rehash of the theologies of ancient nations, many of whom have already passed away. Your so-called holy book describes the Divine Being as like to an ordinary man, with the passions of a human being, going about to be seen and felt, and subject, like a common mortal, to love, hatred, anger, wrath and fury."

"Well, if you will make it so," said Miss Meade with a little warmth, "it is but another proof that the natural heart cannot comprehend the things that belong to God. His ways are not like ours, they are unsearchable."

"Mere flippant words," said Zingari, "words which are too often but the refuge of the credulous and fanatical. We cannot comprehend the Omnipotent—the great Brahm—but when your book is, as you say, inspired to tell us what He is, it but robs Him of His glory; no greater misrepresentation of the Deity is possible than that given of Him in many places in your Bible. It makes Him a God which cannot be seen, and which has been seen, a God of love and a God of hatred, a God of pity and a God of

vindictiveness, a God unchangeable and a God of instability. Your book is full of amazing contradictions which your priests vainly strive to reconcile; and together, your arrogant priests and inspired contradictions have as yet only mystified dupes and curbed the true progress of humanity. Better that the book had never been written."

"And woman, what would the world be without it?" said Miss Meade, looking sternly at Zingari. "What would this great nation be without its Bible and its authorized expounders?"

"A world of more peace and less war, a world of more human happiness," replied Zingari, "a world of more humane ideas. Your great book has consecrated imposition, and made tyrants of priestly pretenders whom you revere as its authorized expounders—how happy for mankind were there no such crafty priests, no such greedy, aspiring, paid agents of mystery. Without them your nation would be more truly great, it would be less plundered, and less impoverished. Your Bible has displaced truth and subverted man's ideas of right and wrong; it has taught men to submit to extortion, and to become reconciled to abuses, to political and theological despotism in every shape and degree. The Bible and the priests, the Bible and the priests, have done all this."

"You are in error," resumed Miss Meade. "Those who will pervert its plain teaching, those alone, only create the abuses which you seem to think exist. The Bible is the great supporter of truth—it is truth itself. It is the great opponent of despotism, and denounces every kind of oppression."

"Wild assertion," said Zingari calmly, "wild assertion, child. If the teaching of your inspired book is so plain, its meaning has perplexed your most learned men who have harassed and bewildered the world with their wild disputations. It has given rise to Popery and its silly rites, it has created a hundred jarring sects: and in this land, as in others, it has established that great nursery of pretence and extortion—a State Church. The Bible is

not the opponent of despotism, it commands men to be submissive to rulers, and history tells us what too many of these have been. You surely know that when that vile oppression, the slave trade existed, the bishops—your high authorized expounders—opposed emancipation, and, like other religious doctors interested in that dreadful traffic, quoted the Bible in support of slavery. I have no faith in your Bible, I sometimes begin to doubt every so-called inspired book—even the Vedas. Inspiration! Alas, I sometimes think that it is but the parent of superstition, the ally of the cunning against the simple, of the strong against the weak, the black shadow out of which proceeds the most degrading of all servitude—mental slavery. You speak of your nation being great with its thousands of paupers—the defrauded—which are still increasing. No, neither England, nor any other country, will ever be truly great while a few are permitted to own nearly all the land, and almost all the wealth; while the great majority have neither land, nor a mere sufficiency; while thousands are slaves to severe labor, and while tens of thousands wander about in the most pitiable state of penury, many wishing for death and contemplating a hurried termination of their existence.

“You speak of your doubts,” said Miss Meade, “who has not had them? At times they come like spectres pointing to an abyss, at times like shining angels in the light of dawn. They have been likened to the shadow of truth, to the beginning of philosophy—What are they? perhaps but specious dangers at best,” and then after a few moments’ reflection she continued: “You speak of paupers, why should such be, why should any one be houseless or homeless? God pity them!—But then there must be some poor, some sickly and infirm, and some weeping like the children of sorrow; all cannot be on an equality as to natural gifts or wordly circumstances.”

“I admit that to some extent,” replied Zingari, “but is there not some dreadful abuse in the terrible disproportion between the very rich and the very poor? There are

existing wrongs, legalized impostures, and consecrated frauds, which still crush thousands down to poverty, thousands who have vainly spent their breath in manly and determined efforts against penury—how much have kings and priests had to do with this grossly unjust and unnatural condition of things? But ah,” said she solemnly, while looking upward and holding out her clenched hands, “I see it, it is coming, it is coming, and Nemesis shall overwhelm the usurpers, shall overwhelm them all. Alas, child, there is oppression even in this so-called free land. I and my people have felt it, we have asked for but little—we met with persecution and I met with my first great affliction, the loss of my greatest earthly tie. Alas for Christian pretensions, your missionaries heard our cry, but ran off to distant lands, and left us to unfriendly priests at home. But stay, as you have said so much as to the excellence and purity of your Bible, what have you to say as to the character of some of its ordained expounders, those riotous reverends, those greedy pharisees, those audacious pretenders, that you seem to think so necessary?”

Esther looked up for a moment at the weird face of her interrogator, and after a pause, merely said—“All are not alike,” she then turned her gaze upon some distant star and remained silent.

For a little time Zingari seemed to study the upturned face of the curate’s daughter. The moonlight as if mingling with Esther’s soft eyes must have reached and touched some sensitive vein in the old gypsy woman’s heart, for when Miss Meade turned to speak, she heard a stifled sob, and she saw that Zingari was bent and silently weeping.

Esther really pitied the poor woman, she felt at the moment that Zingari must have had some sorrowful recollection of wrong, perhaps some sad reason for asking such a question as to the general character of the clergy.

“Happy for you, that all are not alike,” said Zingari, after an effort to speak, “happy if you can escape from the wretch that would injure you. Happy for me, if I had

never seen one of your clergy. O, child, I can easily remember when you were scarcely more than a little creeping thing loved by Agnes—ah, why did I mention her dear name!—and welcomed by all in our camp. Can you remember crazy Agnes, my poor stricken, betrayed Agnes? O, how like you are to her now!”

“Yes, I can still remember her,” replied Miss Meade. “Though many years have passed since she sang for me, I was but a little child then, and I have never heard her history; you were silent as to her fate, your tribe was silent, and my father, if he knew much of her, scarcely ever mentioned her name. But why speak of her as your poor betrayed Agnes?” Esther felt truly concerned, and awaited a reply.

The tears stood again in Zingari’s eyes. “A sad, sad fate,” at last she replied, “a sad fate for one so young, so innocent, and so beautiful—better that you should not hear it even now. Yet my poor Agnes was betrayed and sent to an untimely grave. Cursed be her deceivers, hurried be their doom!” The old woman now started up, and looked wildly around, her eyes flashed in the moonlight, and she seemed as savage as a tigress that would rush upon those who had destroyed her young. “God’s curse be on them,” again said the old woman. “O Agnes! I could tear thy foul betrayer limb from limb.” And then in a few moments after these passionate exclamations, she grew calmer, and said: “But better let him to his fate—the doom of the wicked is almost certain—few shall escape. I have waited for this, and shall wait a little longer.” The old woman became again subdued, she had been almost overcome by the vehemence of her feeling, and now, as the poor withered thing sat crouched at Esther’s feet, she covered her face with her hands, and sobbed aloud. In deep sympathy at the moment with Zingari, Miss Meade was so much affected, that she felt unable to utter one word of comfort on this trying occasion; she merely stooped, and then tenderly raising the old woman’s hand, pressed it to her lips.

"Angel of the night, daughter of the stars, lily of the moonbeams," at last murmured Zingari, "may flowers ever mark thy footsteps, may the raven's wing never shadow thy doorway, may no hidden serpent ever watch thy path." She then placed her hand lovingly upon Esther's head, and muttered some words—perhaps some prayer or incantation—in an unknown tongue.

"My poor stricken friend," said Miss Meade, "your cause of sorrow must be great, your grief must be severe. I feel touched by your kind words, and would gladly suffer to relieve you; but even now, you can find comfort, if you can, from your heart, pray for your enemies and persecutors, and for all who have brought you this great trouble. Forgive, that you may be forgiven."

"I cannot pray for fiends," said Zingari, hastily, "prayer for such would be but mockery. I might forgive an injury done to myself, but I cannot forgive the terrible wrong done to an innocent creature. I need no forgiveness," she continued, resuming her wonted energy, "for I have harmed none—neither God nor man."

Upon a little reflection, Miss Meade thought it useless to press a Scriptural precept, which she believed the gypsy woman well knew was scarcely ever followed by individual Christians, either lay or clerical; and perhaps never by Christian nations. Zingari was naturally quick in detecting a fallacy, and, in her present mood, would be unsparing in her caustic remarks against texts or maxims so far beyond human nature as to be practically overlooked by priest and people.

"I have harmed none," continued Zingari. "During my long life, I have had many opportunities of crushing those who have injured me, but my nature—such as it is—was often superior to revenge, and I have waited to see retribution come without being sought for. I cannot have long to live; and if you choose to listen, I will now tell you something of my life; and in this lonely place, you shall also hear something concerning poor Agnes, and of her sad fate.

It is now a few months over a century since I was brought to this country by an English family returning from India. You look surprised at this statement, yet it is true. I was seven years old when I left Bombay, and if I live until next March, I shall be 108 years old; and though this is called a great age—there are other persons older—yet I feel more vigorous at the present time than most people do at seventy; a regular life makes the difference, and were it not for my many troubles—for that greatest of all miseries, the loss of one dearer to me than life—and the bitter misfortunes of poor Agnes, I should have fewer wrinkles in my face, and have still, perhaps, some of the dark silken hair, which it was said, added so much to the personal attractions which I may have had in my youthful days. The gentleman in whose family I was more companion than servant, was an officer in the service of the East India Company. He remained in India, and survived scarcely a year after the departure of his family. You, of course, remember the history of that eminent Christian Governor, Warren Hastings, who was sent to civilize, and perhaps to help to Christianize India, and whose career, like too many others of his class, was but one of tyranny and plunder; he was the cause of great disaffection among the natives, and in an endeavor to suppress one of the many uprisings of the time, this officer was killed. The pension allowed his family was not very great, and my mistress, who was a very good woman, though a professing Christian, did her best to make this pension, with a few other resources, answer to support her family, and to educate her little daughter—a girl about my own age—and myself. The family was fortunately not large—the lady and her daughter, myself, and my aunt, who, though a Hindoo woman, and a sincere believer in the sacred Vedas, became so much attached to her mistress as to volunteer to accompany her to England. I was then an orphan, and as I had been a favorite in the family previous to its departure from India, I, of course, could not be left behind.

In addition to this number, we had two ordinary servants. We lived in a pleasant part of England, not many miles from Pendell, where we now are. I was sent to school with the lady's daughter; I was instructed in almost every useful branch, and even had the benefit of some accomplishments, which were willingly paid for by my good mistress; indeed, I was almost treated as the equal of little Mary, her daughter. But though the lady's great desire was to make me a Christian; though I had attended church, and in course of time had become as well acquainted with the contents of the Bible as the most advanced in our classes, yet my aunt was so rigid in her faith—though by no means rigid in her practice—that she always succeeded in counteracting the teachings of any Christian friends who would have me become a proselyte, and in convincing me, by sound reason and argument, that our ancient creed was far superior to Christianity—was, in fact, the source from which that and all other creeds had been drawn; and in this belief I have still continued and ever shall remain.

Well, in course of time, my kind friend and mistress died; my poor aunt died shortly afterward; my companion—I might almost call her sister—Mary, got married and removed to a distant part of the country, and in less than three years afterward, I heard of her decease. I was now left alone, I somehow found but little sympathy from Christian people, and still less from many who called themselves Christian missionaries. It had been asserted that I was obstinate in my disbelief in the true faith, and that I had treated its teachers with contempt, yet notwithstanding this, and my being looked upon as a heathen, I found some of your State Church ministers approach me for another purpose; they spoke of my charms, and even offered me tempting inducements to become their slave.

Fortunately I was not left without a little means, and I succeeded in escaping every snare. Few can ever tell how many impoverished creatures, how many friendless and destitute women have been lured to sin, and dragged

down to infamy, by the specious, unscrupulous wiles of ministers of the gospel. In her will my kind mistress had left me a hundred pounds; by the death of my poor aunt I received nearly an equal amount, besides a few valuables, and as I happened at that time to visit a camp of wandering gypsies, I found that they were the descendants of an Indian race, that many of them understood my native language, and that their religious ideas were in most respects like my own. I had become disgusted with Christian priests, dissatisfied with Christian people, and stung by their pretensions, and shocked at the dishonesty, the drunkenness, the brutality, and almost the general immorality of nearly all classes who assumed to be superior every way, not only to my own nation and race, but to all other people, that I was glad to be received and treated as an equal by others who were generally supposed to be less honest, less moral, and less civilized. To be plain, I found the change most agreeable; numbers of the English peasantry I had found to be the veriest boors, wretchedly poor, savage, ignorant, and superstitious, such as they were until lately, upon the Heath, and such as can be still found in many cities, towns and counties, of this far famed island, and exceeding, in proportion to their numbers, the degradation of any similar class of people in all India. What a telling lecture might be given in relation to the vast sums of money wasted in extravagant missionary enterprises, and upon the visionary attempts of headstrong, persistent, romantic missionaries to civilize and Christianize the heathen in distant lands while blindly neglecting the thousands of a more vicious, more barbarous, and a more debased population, even in this very land of Britian. Verily, no folly can surpass the vagaries of your impulsive fanatical missionaries!

I had been scarcely a month with my new friends when the chief man—some called him the king—of the gypsy tribes paid us a visit. He was young, very intelligent and of fine appearance. His manner was most agreeable, he seemed to be beloved by all his people, and to me, in par-

ticular, he paid the greatest attention. Ah! me, what happy, happy days! He must have possessed some strange power of fascination, for cautious, as I then was, I soon found that he had won my affections; that the world without him would be to me a dreary, dreary waste. But oh, happiness! I shortly afterwards discovered that he loved, that he worshiped, that he adored me. Then came the rainbow of my life; then came the glorious sunlight of my existence; then came the silvery moonbeams by night—brighter than these; then sprang up the modest early flowers at dawn, glittering with dew; then came the languid rose at noon, yielding its rich perfume in the shade; then came the gentle lily quivering in the evening air, and crowned with the rays of the setting sun; and then again came the moonbeams, and the soft song of the nightingale; and again came the glittering host of heaven to look down upon our happiness. O God! why does not my heart burst when I think of this lost felicity! Is there a heaven that will restore it, is there a hereafter that will unite us again? If so let it come soon. O Seraphic vision of departed bliss, stay, still linger before me, and let thy bright, thy golden, thy beautiful wing, bear me onward and waft me at last to my lost love—to my long lost angel!”

While the shimmering waves now seemed melted into moonlight, Zingari was again stooped and sobbing, and Esther's eyes were streaming with tears.

CHAPTER XXV.

ZINGARI AND ADRIAN.

WHEN Zingari was able to resume her narrative she said: "For over twelve years my married life was almost ~~one~~ delightful period of unalloyed happiness. Adrian and I seemed to have but one soul, one heart, one desire, and that was to make each other happy. I never knew a being of greater nobility of spirit, greater purity of thought, greater simplicity of desire, or one of greater disinterestedness. Our people loved us, and though our habits were industrious, little labor was permitted us, for we were cheerfully supplied with most of the simple necessities which we required; we always had more than sufficient, and were, therefore, well enabled to help many poor strangers who craved our charity or assistance. All was sunshine. I seemed to inhabit a new and beautiful world where there was little or no care. The earth appeared to be but a paradise of brightness and flowers, with intervening green fields, gentle hill slopes, shaded vales, mossy rocks, and clear running streams. We seldom remained long in one place—perhaps a week; sometimes a month; and then we, and a number of our people, wandered away to some other beautiful spot, where we fixed our tents and traded with the inhabitants. We offered them for sale strange little baskets, curiously made ornaments, vases for flowers, fancy articles, and trinkets of different kinds. In most places we were readily welcomed, and troops of children with their parents would visit us on

holidays. We had music, and singing, and innocent games. Sometimes Adrian, or I, or one of our people would play the guitar, and then we would have a dance, in which many joined, under the shade of some great oak; and often, before our departure from a neighborhood, we received many little presents, and many tokens of regret from those who had visited us.

Thus it was for a long time—for years—that we went from place to place. In summer time, and in the genial seasons, we generally selected rural spots which gave us a view of the sea; in winter time we sought some sheltered place in the vicinity of villages or towns. Our industry was constant, our wants were few and we almost always had an abundance of all that was really needful. Though we laid no claim to any portion of the land—we had no ownership in it—some of our people occasionally got permission to cultivate a few roods by a road side; we left the little spot, planted or sown, and returned in due season to dig or reap; and this for the time was nearly equal to ownership of the soil. We in a manner looked upon the wide earth as the common property of all, and many of us often wondered in our simplicity why it was that some had the power to refuse us and others the use of an acre for necessary cultivation, while having or keeping hundreds or thousands of acres of good soil lying idle and unproductive; we wondered how it was that some could revel in indolent wealth, while others—the far greater number—were doomed, or forced, to a life of harassing toil, and extreme poverty; it was to us at the time really a matter of surprise why such extremes, why such apparent favoritism and injustice, were permitted to exist.

The common desire of our little community was to make the most of life, to enjoy its innocent pleasures, and enable others—even strangers—to do the same. In this way years passed. Ah how rapidly! I forgot that there was such a thing as care, and I little dreamed at the time that those days of bliss could ever have an end. Alas for my inexperience! What did I know of the great

world and its wiles? Adrian and home were then the world to me, and while in the midst of peace and felicity, my fancy was unable to conjure up any shadow of approaching sorrow. How often do we forget, while admiring the rainbow, and the yellow tinted clouds, which may appear at sunrise, that these are perhaps but the precursors of a day of storm and gloom!

As tribes of the gypsy community were to be found here and there in different parts of the country, it often happened that my husband would pay them a visit. This he was expected to do, it was in part a kind of duty incumbent on him as chief man. At first I used to accompany him, always attended by one or more of our people, but in course of time, when I had two little daughters to take care of—one about two years older than the other—I found it inconvenient to leave them, and had therefore to remain in camp with our friends; and though at such times Adrian would make the shortest possibly stay, yet I found the days dreary and wearisome until his longed for return.

It was on one of these occasions of his absence, that our first difficulty, I might say our first great trouble with strangers commenced; ending, alas, some time afterward in what was to me the most terrible affliction. We had but lately moved to a neighborhood which had been but seldom visited by our people. Several of the inhabitants, mostly those called the peasantry, came as usual to see us. We traded little articles with them, and afterwards entertained them and their children with songs and stories; and, as the nights were fine, many would remain with us until a late hour. One Sunday evening in particular, a great number of persons flocked to our camp. They must have thought the gypsies a wonderful people; they found them agreeable, entertaining, and often instructive; quite honest and harmless, and not the thieves and vagabonds such as they had been too often represented. Well, while in the midst of some innocent sport, I think I was the first to observe two mounted men gallop

hurriedly to where we were. It was a summer's evening, and one of the strangers seemed to be heated and angry, and he shouted in an excited manner before he reached us. I then noticed that several of the people tried to steal away, as if afraid of being detected in the commission of some great offence. Upon inquiry I found that it was the rector of the parish with a bailiff that visited us. The rector spoke in a loud and authoritative voice, his words were threatening and his gestures violent; and many persons present, especially the women and children, appeared to be much afraid of him. It seemed that very few of the laboring class cared to attend church, and for some time many of them had altogether neglected to appear there. This indifference no doubt shocked the pious feelings of his reverence, and, possibly anxious for the safety of the souls of those whom he called, 'his people,' he took this method of reproving them for their carelessness; and for that which he called the open violation of the law of the land. This reproof was not very gentle for he denounced them as heathens, infidels, dissenters, and open Sabbath breakers, and assured them in forcible terms, that he would commit them all to prison for their studied contempt of both law and gospel. He then referred to us as being a noted set of wandering thieves and impostors, wily and deceitful, deluding others into unbelief and destruction; and as we were therefore considered even more guilty than the others, we were of course included in his threat of punishment.

Though many of the women were, as I have said, much afraid of this reverend detective, not one of our people seemed to care for the stormy berating of the rector. Even when he became most excited, some of our men only stretched themselves lazily out before him, and smiled and smoked their pipes as if amused by his vociferations; while others tried to reassure those who had been intimidated. This conduct must have greatly enraged the holy man. To be treated with such indignity was evidently an unpardonable offence—he at once ordered the attend-

ant bailiff to take down the names of such as he knew, and, if possible, to find out the names of every offender present, in order that all should be summoned to appear before the court of his reverence on the following morning.

Sure enough, next day at an early hour, five or six of our men, and as many of our women, were cited to appear and answer for the offence of Sabbath breaking and profane scoffing. I was fortunately not included among the offenders, and, anxious to conciliate, I thought it best to pay an early visit to the rector, for he was to be the magistrate, and I might say, the sole judge and jury in the matter; but I could gain no admittance, he would neither see me, nor listen to any plea that might be offered, and before the noon of that day, over a dozen persons, men and women were convicted by his humane reverence and fined a crown each, with costs; and in default of immediate payment, each person was to be committed to prison for one week at hard labor. In this extremity, I called again. Few of the gypsies had any money to spare; the penalty might be considered small by those who had means, but it was a large amount to those who had nothing, and I was informed that none of the poor working people who were among the convicted, could possibly pay the extortionate demand; some were absolutely without a farthing, and I pitied them. The rector admitted me this time; he had been probably somewhat appeased by the triumph of justice at his hand. Though I had not seen him for years, I knew him at a glance—more portly and florid than he was when he first approached me with an infamous proposal. He must, however, have forgotten me. He looked like a man that lived high and drank much, and that was evidently sensual enough to seek indulgence of the basest passions. I did not misjudge him. He was more than civil to me—rather too free in his manner—but I thought it best to be on my guard, to say nothing that might irritate, but rather to accept the compliments he paid me. He would, however, admit

of no plea for his parishioners, and to prison they were sent.* The cases of the gypsies, though aggravated by their demeanor toward him, he would, for my sake, he said, take into consideration, and in the meantime delay proceedings until the return of my husband. That evening the rector visited our camp; easy and jocular, as if he had been one of ourselves, or intimate with us for years. I had much to do to prevent him from being insulted; as it was, he got but sullen looks and a frail disguise of contempt. The gypsies can, like others, be resentful, but can also as readily forgive. The rector's offence was not trivial; his treatment of them was a wanton injury, yet on my account, and knowing his power and influence, he was suffered to call and to depart without hearing any offensive observations. The next day he called, and the day after; he evinced a desire to become familiar, and it was soon noticed that he paid obtrusive attentions to a handsome woman, the young wife of one of our men. A quarrel ensued, I could not prevent it, and the rector was driven with curses and bitter reproaches from our camp.

After this, no one could be more base or treacherous; he sent a bailiff to collect the fines; my husband had but just returned, and he called upon the reverend magistrate to pay the penalties, as the easiest mode of getting rid of the trouble, but fresh troubles followed. After the rector had sent some of his poor parishioners to prison, a great uproar took place, and about midnight some of his property was maliciously injured, and some was stolen. We knew nothing of this, for Adrian had determined upon removal from the place, and he had already sent on some of our things: and though the weather had become very cold, wet and stormy, he would not remain, but in his eagerness to get away, he failed to take the usual precautions, and was for some hours under a drenching rain while going forward to our new ground. The next day he

* See Note 13.

felt very poorly; we had barely time to fix our tents and get things arranged in our new location, before he had to lie down; by evening he grew worse, and before it was dark, news had reached us that greatly aggravated his symptoms. We heard that, on the night of our departure, another unlawful visit had been paid to the rector's premises, and that his stables and out-houses had been burnt to the ground; that his horses had been saved with difficulty, but that much valuable property had been destroyed; and worse than all, it had been asserted by his reverence, that it was all the work of the vagabond gypsies—one or more of his outraged parishioners were, no doubt, the real culprits—but in the excitement, our people, who were really innocent, were wantonly charged with the offence.

This report had a very bad effect upon my husband, his fever increased, he raved wildly through the night; by daylight he grew calmer, and obtained a little sleep, and while in this state of repose, he was rudely disturbed by two constables, who had a warrant for his arrest as principal in the arson lately committed. Some of our men became furious, and were fully prepared to resist the constables. Adrian again became delirious, and his other symptoms grew alarming. Among ourselves we almost always treat our own sick, but in this case I found it necessary to send for a physician; his certificate was any way requisite to satisfy the constables that their prisoner could not be removed. It was with difficulty after all that we got these men to leave us, they paid little regard to my feelings, they seemed to care nothing for the distress they caused us, and it was not until the doctor, who was a humane person, gave heavy bonds for the appearance of my husband upon his recovery, that they went away.

Gracious heavens, what days and what nights followed! Prostrate before us all, raving and helpless, lay the pride of my life, the waning star of my existence, my love, my hope, my all. O! God, what a change from manhood, health, and beauty, to the poor, pale, blighted, withering

creature before us! All that could be done was done; the devotion of our people was most affecting. I sat by him night and day, I alone moistened his parched lips, and heard his slightest whisper, and waited and waited to hear him breathe my name. Sleep seemed to have left me forever, but how dreadful were my waking dreams! Days and nights must have again passed away when I seemed suddenly awakened from one of these wretched trances. Was it the awful silence that whispered me to listen? Ha! that was my name. O God! O Adrian! There he still lay, his eyes now pleading to mine. I looked from him to those now around us. It was night and the feeble light cast a melancholy ray; and there stood the doctor as if marking his last pulsations. Would they had been mine! 'Zingari.' Yes! Great God, why calls Adrian now! I clasped my hands and looked from him again in terror. Was it that wild look of mine that bid them weep? O yes, they wept and were sobbing, and some of the little gypsy children who would stay near us were weeping and sobbing too. But I could not drop a tear. Those poor fading eyes then looked upon all affectionately, and then turned again to me pleading and pitiful, as if to look a last adieu. 'Zingari.' My name whispered again! 'Yes, I am by thy side.' By an effort he laid his hand in mine—the blood seemed to rush from my heart. That attenuated hand was now cold and clammy, the touch of death was on it. When I knelt, the others did the same; there were tears, but not a sob was now heard, the only sound was the faint moan of the melancholy night wind. He must have thought it a call for him; his last smile came with his last words—his solemn but his affectionate parting—'Zingari, Zingari, we shall meet again.' "

Here Zingari was once more completely overcome; the tears poured fast down her sunken cheeks, and she was an object of sincere pity to Esther, who now felt totally unable to control her own feelings of sorrow.

After a mournful silence the poor old gypsy woman

spoke again: "It was our last, sad parting. I never saw him again. I must have swooned at the moment of his death, and the lurking fever, which I must have hitherto controlled by some powerful moral influence, had now full sway, and boiled in my blood, and burned in my brain, and left me raving and senseless. For over a month I lay prostrate and unconscious, oscillating between life and death. O, would that death had then the victory! O that oblivion, or nirvana, had come to save me from that terrible loneliness of heart, and from all future sorrows! More than a month had been as completely blotted out of my life as if I had no existence during that period. But reason dawned again, reason that brought me a dread recollection of what had lately passed. How I then wished for death! By degrees I was informed of Adrian's interment; of the refusal of the clergyman of the parish in which we then were, to permit the sacred remains of my husband to desecrate the place of Christian burial. This clergyman had sympathized with his clerical brother whose property was said to have been destroyed by us; and was not Adrian in his sight an unconvicted felon, and worse, an unconverted heathen? No better did he think him; and the idea of permitting him to rest in consecrated ground with the baptized dead of the Church, could not be thought of. Burial was refused. Many of the humble laborers of the neighborhood felt for us, and would willingly have overruled the decision of the uncharitable priest, but they were powerless—the law was on his side.*

The gypsies would not, however, put their beloved chief under ground in a common field, or by the road side, and, as we were then not far from this place, besides having many warm friends among the poor rough people of the Heath, to whom my husband had often been very kind, it was privately suggested that he should be interred at Pendell. He was taken away from me in the night—I

* It is not uncommon for clerical bigots to refuse interment to those who have not been baptized in the State Church.

knew nothing of it at the time. There was sorrow upon the Heath when his loss was known, and if a rector or parson of any kind had interfered to dispute his right to a few feet of earth in the old grave yard, I believe that these wild impulsive creatures would have torn down the parsonage, if not the very church itself. Our friends fortunately met with no hindrance. You were not then born; neither did your father yet live at Pendell. There was, I am told, a great procession by night, and there were hundreds that were seen weeping for the first time, whose hardened natures, it was said, had lost the feeling that produces tears. That guileless old man, Stephen Gray—who was then young—had a grave ready. His friend, Sarah Afton, held a lamp; and though there was no religious service, no formal prayer, or no funeral rite, Adrian's tomb was moistened and bedewed with tears, and all that remained of my poor dear husband was consigned to the earth, more like the ashes of a real prince of men, than the body of one accused of crime, and hated and despised by clerical despots who knew nothing of his virtues.

You may have often seen his grave; it is in a remote corner, not far from the resting-place of the ancient Valiant family. Old Stephen Gray can point it out—I must live near it forever. It is my flower garden; the only little spot of earth that I cultivate, There I often watch my lilies in the moonlight, and wait in the silent night, and gaze at the distant stars, until the weeping flowers mingle their tears with mine. While my hand has still its cunning, roses shall ever bloom around him. See, I have one of them here,” and Zingari displayed a faded rose pressed close to her heart, “and when I pluck another, I hide this withered thing in the same earth that hides him who was the sacred lotus flower of my existence. From this same grave I have often listened to your music at midnight; and the solemn tones of the organ in the old church have often lured me to dream of a hereafter.

‘Zingari, we shall meet again.’ These were his last words. O tell me, is such a meeting possible? Is there to be a hereafter, a happy reunion of those long separated, a never-ending period of bliss for souls that are immortal? Is there an Everlasting? Can we have a proof of the immortality of a single soul, or of the forever of a created intelligence? Forever! O the immensity of that unending of which time itself is but the shadow! O the unceasing changes of that Forever! Generation after generation to pass away, the mighty works of man to crumble, immense rocks to become dust, great mountains to wear away, the vast ocean to become dry, and the whole earth itself to be dissolved into its original vapor. And then, after eons of ages, suns, stars and planets to fade out and still interminable cycles of time to be perpetually flowing onward, flowing onward into the vast abyss of eternity, and still to be no nearer the end! O, that incomprehensible word, Forever—that overwhelming idea of duration—Eternity.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE STORY OF AGNES.

“A SHORT time after the sorrowful visit to Pendell,” resumed Zingari, “we moved to that place—I wished to be near the grave of Adrian. At first the people of the neighborhood were friendly—we found the working class always so—but the evil rumor of being connected with the destruction of the reverend magistrate’s property followed, and many persons kept away as if afraid of being seen with us. The clergy in many places had warned their parishioners to give us no further encouragement; they were men who had it in their power to serve or to injure, and it might not be safe to oppose their wishes. In old times, as you may be aware, our people were dreadfully persecuted by Popes, and other fanatical Christian rulers. The principal Christian nations of Europe vied with one another in hanging, and burning, and otherwise brutally persecuting them for being diviners and wicked heathens!* As it was now, however, we felt that we were suspected and watched, and that the better plan would be to remove to another place in order that time might enable us to prove how false were the accusations against us, and how peaceable and orderly we could be among those that were willing to confide in our good conduct. The people of the Heath proved to be

* In England barbarous decrees were issued against the gypsies by King Henry VIII in 1531, and by Queen Elizabeth in 1563.

our friends. Wretchedly poor and degraded even as they then were, they felt that, like themselves we had been badly treated by most of the clergy; they sympathized with us in our misfortunes, and gave us an invitation to the only place they had to offer. We accepted their kind proposal. Even in that desolate region we found one pleasant spot, one shaded retreat at some distance from the noisy taverns on the Heath. The rough toil-worn men were glad to see us come among them, though stern and almost savage towards most others, and often brutal among themselves, they were invariably kind to us, and many of them, I have little doubt, would have died for our protection; and for years we have lived together without altercation of any kind.

As I said, I wished to be near the graveyard; the Heath is not far from Pendell—you know where our tents are—and I could travel to the old church every day if I chose, or steal away at night, as I often do, to sit by that grave, close to which I must expect before long to be laid myself.

In about six months after my husband's death I lost my oldest child; she had always been delicate, and having been very much attached to her father, she seemed even at her infantile age, to feel generally depressed at his loss. She pined away and died quietly in my arms—another sore affliction—but as she had not been baptized in the Christian sanctuary, in order to save any trouble with the rector or curate, and to insure her peaceable interment in so-called consecrated ground, we took her away stealthily by night and laid her by the side of her father.

Well, you must believe that the additional bereavement added much to my sorrow, but I still had my remaining child to claim my attention, and to save me from the great despondency which might otherwise follow. She grew up to be a healthy, beautiful woman, and, in course of time, she became the wife of a trader who used to deal among our people. He was an honest person, no believer in any kind of religion, and had no national pre-

dilections to interfere with his sympathies in the choice of a wife, or of a friend; and none could be of a more genial or humane disposition. He had sufficient means to keep my daughter comfortably; and their married life, though of short duration, was one of the happiest.

About a month after their marriage they removed to a distant part of England; I was pressed to go with them, but I had decided to remain. Nearly two years afterwards she gave birth to a daughter—this child was Agnes. She was the only child they ever had, and all that could be done by parents to educate and fit her for a higher station was done by them; and before Agnes was fifteen years of age, she was generally considered to be the most accomplished girl of the neighborhood in which she resided. A little after this her father removed to a village not far from the city of Oxford, and they were scarcely well settled in that place before he died suddenly. I visited my daughter at that time and offered her such consolation as I could.—I had only seen her twice previously, since her marriage, once when Agnes was born, and once afterward when she had a severe sickness. I might have lived with my daughter; her husband often entreated me to do so, but my habits of life were so established, that I could not live away from my gypsy friends, nor at such a distance from that sacred spot in Pendell graveyard.

For some time after this sad loss my daughter continued to reside near Oxford. Though her husband had lost in certain business transactions, still he left sufficient means to enable her and her child to live in comparative comfort. Agnes became a fine singer, and it was not long before she was induced to appear at public concerts. Indeed it was asserted that her vocal powers were a great attraction on many such occasions; and whenever her name appeared on the bills a crowd was sure to be in attendance. Her mother of course felt proud of this. Agnes was even mentioned in the papers as one yet likely to become a *prima donna*, and it was hinted that certain

great managers of London Opera Houses had an eye upon her.

Agnes in person was simply beautiful, in manner modest, and in disposition kind and confiding. She was devoted to her mother, and the liberal sums which she readily obtained for her musical services were at once poured into the lap of her loving parent. In course of time her name as a singer had become famous, and among others from distances far and near, certain students from Oxford came to hear her. Two of these in particular paid her very marked attention; they were divinity students, or nominally such, and one of these was the youngest son of a nobleman. He had heard her sing at the Cathedral in Oxford, to which church she had often been invited, particularly on important occasions, as if to make the services more attractive.

You are probably aware that it is quite common for the aristocracy to secure positions in the Church for their younger sons. If a nobleman has four sons, he generally manages to get the eldest into Parliament with a view to the diplomatic service, or to a higher office; the next one he gets into the army; the next into the navy; and should no other opening be found, whereby an office may be monopolized, the portals of the church are always open; for the episcopate of the establishment have always had a preference for aristocratic recruits; and somehow these scions of nobility generally succeed after ordination in attaining that special spiritual grace said to be so indispensable as a qualification for an Episcopal throne, far sooner than men more learned, or, as considered by many, more worthy.

Well, these two divinity students were evidently great friends; they were mostly seen together; or at least, where the one was, the other was sure to be if possible. There was good reason for this; one, as I have said, was the son of a lord, the other was the son of a poor attorney, whose limited income obliged him to pinch himself, and live as sparingly as possible, in order that his only son might be enabled to gain University honors, and

afterward, perhaps, through the influence of some profligate Christian who had the presentation of *livings* at his disposal, to get a chance of entering the Church. The son of the attorney, familiarly called 'Tom' by intimates, was of a wily, servile disposition, and something peculiar in his manner took the fancy of a fellow-student, the Hon. Mr. Vernay, who made this young man his boon companion on almost all occasions, and even supplied him liberally with money from the ample allowance granted him by his noble father. Tom knew what he was about; by every act he cultivated the friendship of Vernay—friendship with him was more an art than a feeling—and, without seeming obsequious, he still managed to regulate his tastes and his opinions to be in accord with those of his aristocratic fellow-student.

Vernay was struck with the beautiful face of Agnes; her voice thrilled him as no other voice ever did; he soon began to feel that he could not live without her; and it is possible that he would, if necessary, have resigned title and family claims to call her his own. His companion was not slow to discover the impression which Agnes had made. He, too, was somewhat struck with her appearance, and would have liked to make advances on his own account, but, following his usual course toward Vernay, he readily gave way to him; and though he lavished much praise upon the personal charms of Agnes, he took good care to leave the impression that he was, however, no way smitten with the beautiful singer; and he made it a point to turn the warm feelings of Vernay for Agnes to his advantage in other respects.

Vernay, being rather diffident—and more especially so toward the object of his affections, scarcely knew how to obtain an introduction to Agnes; a mere hint to his friend, however, was sufficient. Tom, who could be forward enough, managed to bring the young people together. Vernay had a delightful interview, for which he felt additionally grateful to his confidant; the artful Tom had said much to Agnes in praise of his fellow-student, and it

must be said that Agnes herself felt greatly interested in the noble young man who had paid her so many compliments; and, apart from family connection—a sentiment which could not influence her toward him—she secretly hoped and wished that the impulsive feelings of Vernay might be sincere, and might ripen into love—a love which she could return.

Months passed away, the interviews between Vernay and Agnes were frequent, and mutual love was the result. Already the fame of Agnes had reached London, and a splendid professional career was before her. Operatic managers had made tempting proposals; these, at the intimation of Vernay, she at once declined, and for this compliance he was just as willing to make a sacrifice. He well knew that his father's aristocratic ideas would never permit him to consent to the union of his son with a so-called 'low-born person,' more particularly with one allied in any way to the gypsy race, and that as it would be useless to try and obtain his permission to a connection which would only be considered degrading; Vernay, therefore, resolved to forfeit all family claims and get married privately.

It must be said that Agnes, though willing to sacrifice all for him she loved, disapproved of the hasty decision of Vernay; she advised him to see his father, and if all entreaties failed, he might then do as he thought best; any way, it would, she thought, be better to wait; and it was with reluctance that she at last gave her consent to be clandestinely married. This matter being then so far arranged between the two most interested, next it was considered necessary to apprise his friend Tom of their decision. This worthy student was at the time rather taken aback; he did not fancy that this love matter had matured so quickly. Though from the first an admirer of Agnes, he had sufficient policy to appear indifferent to her charms; but subsequent intercourse had only increased his admiration, and while pretending to plead, or to negotiate for Vernay, he became so infatuated himself, that

the bare idea of her becoming the wife of another made him resolve to delay, and finally to prevent, if possible, the intended union. Wise in his way, he had fully gained the confidence of Vernay, and he approached him cautiously. He advised at once that there should be no unseemly haste; would it not be better to give his noble father some hint of what he intended to do; perhaps if he were to ask him to see Agnes, just but once, he might agree to do so, and then it is possible that his opinion of her might be changed. He would, no doubt, see in her a person not only educated, but one of distinguished talents, and a lady in every respect; and he might after all be so favorably impressed with her, as to consider it no discredit to receive her as a daughter.

Then again he argued delay for another reason. Would it not be better to wait until after his ordination—this would surely be within a year. And again, Vernay, he said, might, by being too hasty in this matter, become blind to defects of character and disposition which might possibly in after years cast a shadow upon his happiness. Not that he could see the least blemish himself, not at all, but such a thing might exist, and, as a sincere friend, he begged of him to take time and give his noble father an opportunity of saying either yes or no in a matter of such importance.

Upon reflection, Vernay consented to be advised by his friend, and to apprise his father of his intention to marry. Agnes also, though not too trustful of her lover's confidant, thought it would be the most prudent course to adopt; and as Vernay, still diffident, could not approach his father on such a subject, it was agreed that Tom, his friend and fellow-student should, on his behalf, call upon the nobleman and explain how matters stood. Tom had been at the Hall two or three times before as the guest of Vernay; and now with a letter from him to his father, he made his prompt appearance at the family seat to negotiate in this delicate matter. He was, as usual, well received, he delivered his message with the most serious

countenance, as if he were reluctantly performing a disagreeable duty simply to please a warm friend. He knew that Vernay's father would never consent that his son should marry such a person as Agnes: and, just as he expected—even just as he had hoped—the nobleman was of course indignant when he heard the story, and would have threatened at once were it not for the artful proposal made by Tom, whose policy it was to make it appear, that, as the true friend of Vernay, he had advised him not to become too intimate with a young person, who, though of fair character, might be otherwise sufficiently designing to lead him to believe that love alone was her sole incentive, instead of perhaps—which it probably was—a desire for a connection with a noble and wealthy family; that in fact he had used every argument in his power to warn his friend of the dangers of a hasty union, but to no purpose. He professed the greatest desire not only to serve his friend, but to save a distinguished nobleman the mortification of the misalliance of one of his family with a person of birth so very humble. Tom's proposal now was, that Vernay's father should request that no marriage of his son, with any person whatever, should take place for a year; and, that during that period, Vernay should travel alone on the Continent, and hold no communication with Agnes, except, it might be indirectly through the agency of his college friend. Tom assured his lordship that he thought he could prevail on Vernay to consent to this delay; the task he fully admitted would be difficult, still he had strong hopes of being able to induce his friend to comply with such a request. A year's consideration might do much to change hastily formed opinions—to weaken this strange attachment—and if at the end of that period Vernay's singular notion remained unchanged some other plan might be adopted to lead him to see his error.

In less than a month after Tom's return from the Hall, Vernay was in Switzerland; his parting with Agnes had been most painful; some terrible foreboding led her to

imagine that she would never see him again. Tom, of course made light of the matter, and, after a time, ventured to trifle about such very strict notions of constancy as seemed to possess her mind: and he gaily assured her that the year would not seem long if she only tried to mingle again in public assemblies. People, he said, were anxious to hear her splendid voice where it could be heard to advantage, and it was, he thought, her duty to cultivate and exercise the great talent she possessed, by the favor of Providence, for the delight and edification of others. Tom, as a divinity student could of course, like all the priestly tribe, interlard his remarks, mean and desiging as they might be, with cant and religious phraseology, and soon after he even hinted that she should not refuse to appear in the opera at London. Vernay, he asserted, would not mind it now; though he well knew that his absent friend had objected to have her make any engagement with operatic managers.

Nearly six months had now passed; during the first weeks of his absence Vernay had sent repeated messages of his love, then they became less frequent, and now for over a month nothing whatever had been heard from the wanderer. Agnes impressed to some extent by the cunning assertions of Tom as to the readiness of some impulsive persons to forget absent friends, began to have a suspicion that Vernay's professions of attachment might have been but impulsive utterances, and that in his travels he had probably met with some handsome high born lady to whom he was paying serious attentions, while she herself was in a manner neglected.

Tom was of course too cautious to impute in plain words that his friend could readily grow indifferent, but inuendoes to that effect were not wanting, and Agnes still urged by his plausible reasoning, and partly through a feeling of resentment at the continued silence and probable disaffection of Vernay, consented to appear in London as a principal singer in a certain popular opera. She did appear, and the applause which followed was most enthu-

siastic. Her success was so great, and so elated did she feel that she could not resist the pleading of interested managers to appear again and again. The press teemed with extravagant comments, and musical critics felt almost at a loss for words to do justice to her voice, as well as to her attractive appearance on the stage.

It was not long before Vernay was apprised of what Agnes had been doing in his absence. Copies of the London papers had been forwarded to him in which her name as the great operatic *debutante* had been mentioned; and hints had already been sent him of how readily the fair Agnes could forget her absent friends while thunders of applause were nightly saluting her ears, and the compliments of even princes were delivered to her in perfumed notes by footmen in gorgeous livery.

More than ten months of the probationary year had already expired. Vernay had been as faithful as man could be, but when assured, even though in the cautious ambiguous language of his supposed friend, that the constancy of no woman could be relied on, his anguish was great, and the depression that followed scarcely left life bearable. He would have returned at once to reproach Agnes for her presumed deceit and ingratitude, but his pride forbade him. He was soon noticed to have become gloomy and reticent, to wander away alone, and to remain restless and feverish during the long nights in the foreign hotel, with none able to whisper one word that could restore confidence.

About this time Agnes had another great triumph; a hundred fragrant bouquets were thrown around her feet, and garlands and coronals of roses were flung to her in profusion; the assumed name of the 'Queen of Song' was upon every tongue, and the papers were again lavish with the praises of the beautiful *cantatrice*, yet even during all this elation, the heart of Agnes was true, and though she thought she had been treated with neglect, her true love never once faltered for Vernay; he had been in her thoughts continually. She wished to win fame more on

his account than on her own, and she struggled to believe that after all he would not have reason to reproach her for the course she pursued when the year which was now nearly completed had brought his return.

Yet another, and still another great musical triumph followed, and one of the papers which recorded the additional brilliant ovations which she had received—she loved to read these in her secluded moments—had also a startling item of foreign intelligence. An English traveler, named Vernay, the son of a distinguished nobleman, had recklessly left his guide while ascending the dangerous heights of Mont Blanc, and had fallen from one of the precipitous icy crags into an abyss, out of which his body would not probably ever be recovered.

Were that icy mountain to burst asunder and reveal the frozen and mutilated victims, and the heaps of undecayed dead that had lain for long years—perhaps for centuries—uncoffined in its avalanches, scattered about in the gloomy depths of its snow drifts, the startled beholder, though of the stoutest heart, would be horrified at the appalling sight; and soon as Agnes had looked upon the terrible words—the last she ever read—that woeful scene must have appeared before her, for with one wild scream reason took its flight and left her to mutter her melancholy complaints to trees and shadows, to hum her pitiful song by the running brook, to wail to the night wind, and to wander a maniac forever.

CHAPTER, XXVII.

THE STORY OF AGNES.

“**A**LAS!” continued Zingari, after a sad pause, “what a trial I had after this. I was, of course, sent for immediately. Oh! what a sorrowful picture to see that once beautiful girl, my grand-daughter, in whom we all took such pride, now with disheveled hair and eyes of sadness, sit by the hour alone gazing silently and vacantly afar, and muttering her pitiful incoherences. The Winter season was in its depth, the days were gloomy, and it was melancholy to see her pick up some scattered sear and yellow leaf, and look at it, and hold it out, as if desirous of presenting a type of her own withered hopes. But another calamity was soon to happen. My daughter, who had lately been in delicate health, had received such a shock by the affliction of poor Agnes, that her symptoms suddenly became dangerous, and though she had the most skilful treatment possible to secure, she died within a week after my arrival at her house; and with her last breath she left Agnes to my sole care and protection. I felt at the time as if I must sink under the accumulation of troubles, but I nerved myself for the sad duties before me, and possessing a vigorous constitution, I was enabled, after severe exertion, to overcome difficulties which might have sent another, at my time of life, to the grave.

There was nothing now left for me but to take sole charge of Agnes; she had no other near relative who could care for her as I would. She was most fortunately very

quiet and submissive; more like a delicate child, than a grown woman. I never saw her any way agitated, except when Vernay's deceitful friend made his appearance. He came to see her two or three times after her affliction, and she at once became frightened and tried to escape from his presence. It seemed to have some effect on him, though he tried to be sympathetic, and to appear at his ease; if he spoke to her, she would not reply, but would hide her face, or run to me like a child afraid of danger.

It was then I somehow became impressed to say something to him; and I spoke as the words came. The last time he called at the house, I remember telling him that he was, in my opinion, guilty of some act of treachery or deception, for which he might yet have to answer, and that the misfortune which had befallen Agnes, was in some way attributable to him; how, or why, I could not as yet tell, but it would possibly be revealed some time. I noticed that what I said had a peculiar effect; guilt was apparent, though he looked reproachfully at me, he made no reply, but soon as my eye caught his would-be-scornful look, there was something in my steady gaze that must have intimidated him, for he at once appeared disconcerted, and took his departure.

Away upon the bleak Heath, among our own gypsy friends, and surrounded by an impoverished people, poor Agnes dwelt with us, shut out from the great world of which she had but lately been such an ornament. None could care for her more than we did; none could pity her more than the toil-worn people of the plain.

She would sing at times one of her wild, melancholy strains, and every eye would be dim; she would tell some sad, simple story to the children that always liked to be near her, and even they would turn aside to weep. What she said, or what she did, her most trivial acts, were suggestive of something sorrowful, and generally affected others to tears, though the favor of tears was denied to herself, leaving her woe as it were as cold and as indurated as an icicle.

Some months had now passed since the death of her mother; the poor afflicted girl gave us but little trouble, she was still childlike and humble, still submissive to my slightest wish, yet it was evident to all that she was fading away, and that her malady had no remedy but death. Strange to say I had, so far, never heard her mention the name of Vernay, though we all felt that the sudden news of his unexpected end must have been the true cause of her sad condition; and still more strange was the report that Vernay's father had never expressed the least regret that his son had been so hurriedly sent to eternity. It had been stated that the noble lord had expressed himself more willing to lose his son by such a death, than to lose him in the alliance which rumor had assured him that Vernay had been determined to form; he would rather have that son perish as he had, than be obliged to own Agnes as a daughter. Alas! how stalking pride can sometimes overshadow natural affection.

Notwithstanding this dreadful loss to a noble family, Vernay's friend Tom was never once suspected of having by false reports driven a fellow-being to distraction. The false friend was received at the Hall with the greatest consideration, in fact the distinguished head of the house appeared to sympathize more with him in his presumed sorrow at the loss of his college companion than Tom could ever sympathize with the family for the bereavement they had sustained; and the nobleman himself expressed his gratitude for the skilful manner in which Tom had prevented a union, which, his lordship asserted, must in the long run be fraught with misfortune to the principal parties concerned; and he assured the aspirant for divinity honors, that he should for the future seek his advancement in the Church almost to the same degree he intended for his lost son. Tom of course pretended to be altogether unworthy of such consideration; the part which he had faithfully and conscientiously taken in the matter was dictated by emotions of the truest friendship; he affected to be greatly distressed on account of the ca-

lamity that had happened, and while he wished to make it appear that his grief was most poignant, his insincerity became apparent to others by his parasitical servility to the principal members of the bereaved family.

As time went on Agnes grew worse, none had the faintest hope that she would ever recover. Day after day as I went about with her I watched the progress of her disease. Her wasting form painfully told of her certain strides toward the grave, and that no physician could now be of any avail. In her demented state she had some affecting peculiarities. She would scarcely pass a flower—even the most humble—met in her pathway, without stopping to address it a few words, as if the poor flower alone could understand her appeal, or remedy her pitiful condition. If she saw a stream in her wanderings, she would sit and listen to its murmurings, and throw a leaf or a bud into its little eddies, and while she watched it coursing on the current and passing away forever, she would softly sing some plaintive air, as if warbling an adieu to happiness. And then again on clear calm evenings she would take my hand and lead me to the nearest hill to watch the setting sun, and as the great orb of day disappeared in its halo of glory, she would hum some touching anthem, and the faint sounds of her voice at such times might be likened by many to the echo of the farewell of some departing angel of the blest.

One day I let her wander off alone, I had often done so before, some of our people were usually near her places of resort, and she generally returned in a short time. A few little children followed her; they seemed to take a strange pleasure in being with one so kind and gentle. She had not, however, been gone more than an hour before I was surprised at her hasty return. She rushed into my arms, panting and almost breathless, her eyes had a wild frightened appearance, and she trembled like one dreadfully terrified. The cause was soon apparent. I spoke some soothing words, and in a little time laid her down, and then stole out to try and find out what caused her such

agitation. I myself was somewhat startled by the unexpected appearance of one whom I then considered among the vilest of mankind. Under an oak tree, within twenty feet of me, stood Vernay's deceitful friend. He must have sought an opportunity of coming stealthily to the Heath, for though he might have been personally unknown to many, an evil report was attached to his name, and it was not always safe for such as he to be seen where he now was by broad daylight. He seemed to become uneasy when he found I had recognized him; he might have, perhaps, been informed that I was absent, and he had taken the opportunity of trying to discover Agnes, or learn something of her condition. He would, no doubt, have done much to get her restored, provided there was a hope of ever being able to win her esteem. When he saw me approach him, he attempted to get away, but I told him to remain and hear what I had to say, it would be his safer course; that were I but to discover him to certain parties in the Heath, he might be then and there torn to pieces. He remained, and I went close to where he was standing. I then took from my bosom a letter which had been forwarded to the address of Agnes by some unknown person, who could not have been aware of her misfortune. It was one of Tom's deceitful letters to Vernay, and probably taken from among his papers after his woeful death. I showed it to the cowering wretch before me, and told him that I had now full evidence of his guilt, of his damning treachery towards two unsuspecting persons. He was scarcely able to make a reply. It must have been, he said, a mistake. 'Then read for yourself,' I said, 'that is your vile signature, a signature which I have taken the trouble of proving to be genuine.' He was in a manner amazed at the undoubted evidence of his infamy thus presented. I gave him no clue as to how the letter had come into my possession, and one would think by his guilty look, and his astonished gaze, that he almost imagined me to be more than human thus to be able to hand him on the wild Heath the very letter he had written months before to Vernay.

The letter stated that, according to report, Agnes was spending most of her time among the gay and fashionable in London; that operatic managers were in fact deities she almost worshiped, and that the adulation which she received from certain high born personages was quite sufficient to make her forget her older friends, who, it was evident, had now but an occasional place in her memory. That, from what he had heard, she would shortly leave London for Paris or New York with some celebrated *artistes* on an extensive engagement, and the letter, after much more in the same terms, recommended Vernay not to allow his mind to dwell for the future on any one particular person, unless it might be one who could remember him with an affectionate constancy and regard in his absence.

This was, perhaps, the strongest letter that Vernay had received from his deceitful friend; and it might have been the very one that had brought despair and urged self-destruction. Fortunately poor Agnes was saved the agony of ever reading this infamous epistle; her fate had been, I may say, irrevocably settled long before that letter had reached my hands.

After I had satisfied the wretch before me, that I was fully informed of his treachery, I said to him: 'Go from this place, and never dare to return, if you come back, it will be to hear me pronounce your doom. Go, whether you rise to affluence and distinction, or sink to disgrace, you will never find one to love you truly; you shall find no consolation in your greatest affliction, your last moments shall be without hope, and your future shall seem to be but blackness and despair. I have met him but once since that time; he came here not long ago on a holiday missionary excursion; he came quite forgetful that he had ever seen me, or perhaps that he had been ever here before; he came here with his spiritual authority as Thomas Sumpter, Lord Bishop of Storkchester, the bishop of this very diocese, accompanied by some who might be called his clerical hawks and ravens, to convert us gypsies. I

gave him his answer, and unless I am greatly mistaken, he will never come here again, nor will he, I think, forget what took place between us on that occasion.

You seem very much surprised at what I tell you, but it is the truth. Thomas Sumpter, poor Vernay's fellow-student, was, as I have said before, a most obsequious person, at once fawning and deceitful, he won his way to wealth and distinction by the most contemptible efforts, and though he may be looked upon with veneration by some poor dupes, who have been taught to regard the priestly order or caste with a kind of awe, thinking men, and the many who cannot afford to speak out, will regard him, and such as he is, with scorn and utter contempt.

Thomas Sumpter would have used any means, even the most despicable, to gain the object of his ambition; he feigned humility, and little by little, as a parasite, he made an advance. After his ordination, he was presented to a living by Vernay's father, and not long afterward he became a rector. As he was very intimate with the nobleman's family, in course of time he professed to have formed an attachment for one of his lordship's nieces—his sister's daughter. The nobility have sometimes what may be called poor relations; and as his lordship's sister had been left a widow, with several daughters, and a rather scanty income, Thomas Sumpter, being high in his lordship's favor, and having good prospects before him, was quite safe in making a proposal. His marriage followed, and if his wedded life has not been the most happy—for his wife cares but little for him—the alliance which he formed brought him sufficient influence to secure his elevation to a bishopric; and this is how he became what is foolishly called, 'the right reverend Father in God of this diocese.'

The shock or fright which poor Agnes received from the sudden appearance of this wretch, was productive of the most disastrous effects. For the remainder of the day she would try to hide herself in any corner, where she fancied she could be secure from the observation of any one save myself; before night she began to throw up

blood, her symptoms became alarming, and as we had no doctor near us, I had to use such remedies as I could provide myself. The next day she seemed like one dead. Our people, and our poor friends on the Heath, seemed to vie with one another in their humble endeavors to help the dying girl, but all to no purpose. Poor thing, as she lay with pallid cheek, looking out wistfully at the Spring flowers, or upward at some bright cloud moving across the blue sky, one could see that the finger of death had already touched her brow, and that she was gazing for the last time upon those beautiful objects of nature, in which she ever took such delight. Presently the rich notes of the thrush would reach her ear, and she would attempt to rise, as if to respond with her voice of other days; but, alas! every feeble effort only proved that she should sing no more, not even the simplest plaintive air, and that she must soon leave us forever. As the day declined, she seemed to gaze with melancholy interest upon the glorious sunset, and as she watched the red rays lingering in the west, I could see that her eyes were filled with tears. Soon I saw her lips moving, and I stooped down close to watch her words. In the faintest whisper she said: 'Dear grandma, *the shadow is gone.*' O how thankful I felt at that moment. Poor child, the shadow was gone, but her mind was only restored as if to permit the recognition of her friends once more, and to bid us all a long adieu. Now she seemed to listen; the silence around her was deep, not even the soft evening air would give its gentlest murmur. Again she whispered: 'Grandma, can you not hear his voice? He calls me—hear him—yes, grandma, he calls.' She gave my hand a feeble pressure, it was all she could do, her eyes brightened up, a beautiful smile rested upon her features. 'I am coming, Vernay, I am coming,' and while the ruddy glow was still in the heavens, she passed away, and we stood around in tears, and in the presence of death, when the evening star appeared, as if to signalize the advent of another pure spirit among the blest.

"This," resumed Zingari, after a pause, "is the sad

history of poor Agnes. Can you blame me for attributing her misfortunes to the treachery of Thomas Sumpter, your bishop? and can you blame me for considering him, and such as he is, as being nothing better than consecrated impostors, who deceive and plunder the people of the nation? Aha! let him enjoy his ill-gotten gains; his day of reckoning must come before long.

Since that affliction, I have lived on the Heath, striving to benefit, in my own poor way, the unfortunate people who, in a manner, have afforded us protection. You know to some extent, what their hardships have been; but you do not know all, and you know how utterly it has been out of our power to render them much assistance.

You have also heard of the happy change that has taken place; one truly benevolent man has already done more, in a few months, to humanize and elevate them, than all the priests or missionaries that ever came with prayers or tracts could do in a century. They have not been Christianized, but they have received a change of heart more miraculous than I think Christianity, or what I have seen of it, could ever bring them; a change neither sudden, fitful, nor spurious, like that transient impulse resulting from religious excitement, but one gradual, and beneficent, that is more likely to endure. I have been called a fortune-teller, and your sordid priests have accused me of obtaining money—as they do themselves—by the pretense of superior knowledge—by an atom of truth and a mountain of fraud. It would be well for thousands were your assuming clergy as innocent of deceit as I am. To those who came to consult with me, I generally gave my best advice. I did not, as a matter of form, deal in magic or in mystery, or resort to anything like your religious incantations; I did not always tell them that they would travel to far countries and obtain great riches, or that they should be loved by princes or princesses, or be married to the wealthy and the beautiful. I generally told them that by temperance, industry and perseverance, they might count on success, and that with these virtues,

whether on land or on sea, they had the best chance of becoming prosperous or wealthy. I varied my advice according to circumstances, and any fee bestowed on me for such fortune-telling was generally given to one or another of the destitute people around me. You have perhaps heard that I did more at times than such fortune-telling as I have related; I may have done so. In the presence of some I feel impressed to speak of future events; I speak what I feel at the moment, indifferent as to the issue, and I have been told that my predictions have often been most singularly fulfilled. I know not why I become so influenced but nevertheless it is a fact; yet I make no pretension to supernatural power, if it be such. You I know doubt this power; you look incredulous. You are a believer in a future state—an existence after death—yet what actual evidence have you for such a notion beyond hearsay, or that which you think has been revealed in the Christian scriptures, and know you not how incorrect these have been already proved? You believe that your Bible is an inspired book, and that its record—myths and miracles—is true. You believe in its magicians and in its witches, in its ghosts and in its demons, in its dreams and in its visions, in its morose priests and in its frantic prophets, and in the pious savages and licentious favorites of the Deity. O what a progeny of absurdities is generated by an unreasoning faith! You and many others who claim to be guided by common sense, believe almost without hesitation the most foolish stories, provided they can be taken from your ‘Book of Books’—your paper idol. You believe that certain devils which had been cast out of two exceedingly fierce persons, besought Christ to let them enter a herd of swine, and that when the pigs became possessed, they ran violently down a steep place into the sea and perished in the waters; you believe in ridiculous miracles, and in monstrous doctrines; you believe that the witch of Endor raised Samuel from the tomb, and that the dead rose from their graves and walked about at the time of the crucifixion; you believe that a benevo-

lent Deity will be obliged to damn over three-fourths of the human race because of their opposition to his arbitrary will, or their inability to comply with his law as laid down in your great book; and you actually believe that certain corrupt men such as Thomas Sumpter, your bishop, are the true successors of the apostles, and divinely ordained and appointed to explain this law and guide other sinners in the true road to heaven. O, how strangely credulous you Christians can be, while arrogant as to the superiority of a faith so irrational and delusive! And yet while you believe all this, while you believe in the incoherences and wild predictions of your so-called holy prophets, you doubt my ability to reveal anything concerning the future. As a Christian you can gulp down all the marvelous narratives of your scriptures, and at the same time, even in this reputed age of Spiritualism, you can be as fanatical in your doubts as the most positive materialist. Such people you know talk confidently of the immutability of the laws of Nature, but when they see what is deemed a violation of those laws in their very presence, they still doubt and pronounce the thing impossible. Galileo could not convince the priests that the world moved, he was even forced to deny the theory himself, yet still the earth revolved as before; and though materialists deny that matter can be affected by what is called spiritual agency, yet objects are still moved by the same unexplained influences, and still many of such skeptics remain as positive as ever."

Esther who had remained silent for some time, now said: "I have never seen anything of the kind, how can I believe without reasonable evidence?"

"And still," replied Zingari, "your credulity in the other matters which I have mentioned, and upon which you have such doubtful authority, is most amazing."

"What of your strange mirror?" said Esther, after a little hesitation.

"Ah! you must have heard your father speak of that;

you know as much of it in one sense as I do. It was given me by my poor aunt shortly before her decease; she told me it had been in our family for generations, and that I must never part with it—not even in death. To me, as well as to others, its manifestations have been unaccountable. When I wish it to be used, I have only to fix my mind intently on any person, the living or the dead, and a representative face generally appears; sometimes it fails, or other features known or unknown to myself, can be seen; there are periods when it seems to be of no service; and it loses its peculiar virtue in any other hand than my own, and the cause of all this is as great a mystery to me as to any one else. Look,” continued Zingari, pulling the little mirror from her bosom, “look and see if there is anything for you.”

The act was so sudden on the part of the gypsy woman, that Miss Meade was somewhat startled, and hesitated to look at the dull piece of metal which Zingari held toward her.

“Be not afraid, child, if you see ought, it may be the face of a friend.”

Zingari remained silent for a few moments, Esther looked upon the mirror, the misty appearance slowly cleared from its face, the moonbeams glanced upon it with remarkable brightness, and lo, a face appeared, the face of a stranger; a genial intelligent face, but one quite unknown to Esther.

“You know him not,” said Zingari, “but you will meet him soon and it may be under singular circumstances.” While speaking Zingari had her eyes cast down reflectively, and when she withdrew the mirror she placed it again in her bosom—“Is that an illusion think you?” asked the old woman.

“If it be a deception,” replied Esther in a surprised tone “it is a very remarkable one.”

“Then we shall let time bring you proof,” said Zingari “you will not have long to wait, most of the future events of your life may be in connection with the person that that

picture represents, therefore remember it well.* Many of our greatest scientists and philosophers talk very flip-pantly about the properties of matter, yet they will scarcely admit of the occurrence of manifestations that we witness every day; manifestations that we cannot explain ourselves. So-called *savants* are too often as headstrong and dogmatic in their ignorant opposition to this occult science, as priests once were and sometimes still are, to philosophical facts. See, to what would they attribute this power, a power the virtue of which I know nothing?" Zingari then let her black ebony staff fall to the ground, she then held her hand over it about six or eight inches from the handle, and remained silently in this position for a few moments; then slowly raising her hand one end of the stick gradually followed until it assumed the perpendicular; she then gave her hand a circular motion horizontally, and, while the point of the staff remained in one spot, as on a pivot, the handle described a circle which was gradually enlarged as Zingari stretched out her hand, and, as the rapidity of the motion was increased, a cone-like figure, point downward, was quite apparent; she then slowly drew in her hand little by little diminishing the circle, until the stick stood once more perpendicularly, her hand being fully more than a foot above it; the solid staff was then allowed to fall, and Esther raised it and handed it to its owner.†

"Though the night must be now far advanced," said Zingari, "I shall give you one more evidence of this singular power before we separate." She then produced a small writing slate about four inches wide by six inches

* Stories relating to witches' mirrors are not uncommon—Zingari's mirror has been introduced simply as an embellishment.

† A gentleman—not a Spiritualist—in whom I could confide, informed me that he saw a so-called medium cause a stick to rise and swing around on its point, in the manner described as the act of Zingari. He assured me that he could not be mistaken in what he saw.—*Author*.

In the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Journal for July 1761, an account is given of what a boy named Jonas Rushington related he saw in a looking glass—The faces and forms of *absent* persons appeared.

long in a frame; she told Esther to rub it clean and be sure that there was no writing of any kind on it. The moonlight was sufficiently bright to enable her to do this; she handed Esther a slate pencil and told her to break off a little bit. Zingari then took the slate and placed it flat upon the smooth level surface of a rock close by, the particle of pencil, not larger than a small grain of shot was put under the slate, both persons then put a hand on each side of the frame and held down the slate so that nothing could possibly get between it and the rock. In this position they remained silent for a little time; then a slight tipping sound was heard on the slate, and immediately the pencil was heard as if being moved in writing. Esther in her doubt and surprise, held her ear close to the slate and could not be mistaken in the sound—it ceased—the tipping was again heard, Zingari handed the slate to Esther, and lo! there was a communication in these words: "My dear child—I am often with you, be not afraid to investigate; truth is powerful and will prevail. Your loving mother—Sarah."

Amazing! There was writing, to all appearances the plain legible hand of her mother; of her mother long deceased. Esther really felt nervous at the moment and looked up at her companion for an explanation.

"You know as much about it child, as I do; I cannot say who wrote these words; you are I believe fully satisfied that no art of mine produced them."*

"I am truly astonished," replied Esther, "I know you have not deceived me, yet that writing is most wonderful."

* Having heard that Dr. Slade, of New York could cause writing to appear on a slate in a similar way to that described as having been produced by Zingari, I went with a shrewd friend to the Doctor's house for the purpose of investigating. A slate perfectly clean was placed flat on the table, we carefully examined the table itself; we heard the sound of writing; I placed my ear within an inch of the slate and could not be mistaken as to the very spot from whence the sound came.

My hand *alone* was all the time on the slate, and when I took it up, a few words appeared, the purport of which could only be known to myself. This took place about eleven o'clock in the forenoon.—*Author.*

Esther again scrutinized the communication—"Exactly like my mother's signature; my father would pronounce it hers at a glance."

"Well child," said Zingari taking back the slate, "what you have just witnessed may induce you to admit that the knowledge of the profoundest thinkers is still but very limited, and that there may be revelations yet in store for mankind, far more wonderful than those you have already witnessed.—Now before I go let me tell you something. Unknown to yourself you have given me much comfort, often afforded me delight, while listening to the exquisite strains which many a night I have heard as I sat alone by Adrian's grave. Before we came here to night I heard you in the old church, and your touching melody—almost mysterious and unearthly—brought me tears, yet bid me hope for a hereafter; for a reunion with my loved ones; and your presence now in this retired place, seems to be like that of a comforting angel. There are others near, besides yourself, that I can love and admire for their purity of heart. Strange that the best of our kind are so often found amongst the most secluded, and should so often be obliged to struggle with adversity, and to live, as it were, almost a whole life time in the shade. Your father is a good man, kind and charitable—a priest, in doubt of his creed—and his comparatively humble position has caused him to struggle with many difficulties. Poor old Stephen Gray, guileless and as affectionate as a child has been but a simple sexton, ever but poorly paid, and is now after his long years of service, partly depending on the charity of your father and a few others. There is kind old Sarah Afton, to whose cottage I have ever been welcome, living on the merest pittance; and there are many of the poor people on the Heath, with generous souls, who were until lately scarcely able to obtain sufficient food; and there is one yet of noble nature who has but lately come among us, who has already done much good, who is striving to do more, yet whose name is hardly known in England beyond the boundaries

of his own property. Ought there not yet to be a distinguished recognition for such as these? And you poor girl," continued Zingari tenderly, "you with your wonderful ability, you with your hopes and fears as to the future, what shall I say to you?" Zingari suddenly paused and then slowly placing her hand upon Esther's head, looked down and spoke: "Esther, there is yet trouble before you; in a short time you will have to encounter danger and death; let your heart not fail you, in the darkest hour you will find unexpected aid, and none shall hurt you."

Miss Meade was really startled at the old woman's solemn manner, and at what was evidently intended as a warning or prediction, she was going to speak but Zingari calmly looked up at her, and, while pointing to the East, said: "See, the night is gone, yonder is the dawn, let that faint light in the distance be an omen for good. You have heard my words; be not afraid of their import. We separate now for a time; we may meet again when your hopes are brighter; there are happy years yet before you, and your angelic music will continue to charm many when I am in the grave."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SINGULAR REVELATIONS.

IT is said that the world knows not its greatest men, and no doubt the adage, like other wise observations, is founded upon the experience of the most discriminating. The greatest heroes are the philanthropists and the magnanimous that are content to remain unknown. Superficial and designing men are ever most anxious for prominent positions. It is not every one that attains power that is the most fitted to exercise authority. It is not he that may be at the helm of State, or a popular leader, or in command of an army, that is always best qualified for the important post. True genius is ever modest and retiring; the shallow and conceited are forward and audacious in their pretensions. Men often rise to the most eminent positions by the practice of the basest devices; and too often dissimulation and treachery are the unworthy aids that elevate some to the very pinnacle of greatness. History gives overwhelming evidence, that numbers of demi-gods and heroes—the so-called patriots of ancient and modern times—have risen above the surface, and towered up to Fame, quite indifferent to the havoc or disasters which had preceded, or must have followed, their elevation. Monarchs have reached a throne only by passing over carcasses of the slain; and great commanders have been eager to rise higher and higher by adding to the ghastly pyramid of skulls which was the hideous pedestal of their success. In church and in state, in

camp and in forum, in the highest and in the lowest positions, we find men ready to rush forward to gain distinction, even though they should have to crush hearts, or desolate homes, or blast the reputation of the most deserving. While the truly noble will scorn to ascend by base degrees, others will rise and climb—no matter how meanly they have to overreach, no matter even if every step in the ladder of their ambition has to be a crime. It is said that the eagle with outstretched wings sweeps grandly to the mountain's top; yet the snake will manage to get to the same elevation by creeping on its belly.

While a host of subservient beings are therefore to be found in every direction lying prostrate as it were before such gods of clay, of wood, or of stone as may prove attractive for a time to a throng of fanatical worshipers; while men in every position who claim to be actuated by the noblest desires and governed by the purest motives, can be seen crowding and crushing and intriguing for the precedence and preferment; while we have orators who fear to speak, scribes who fear to write, critics who fear to judge, and a press so pusillanimous as to dread the frown of wealth, the ban of a conjuring priest, or the threat of a knavish legislator; while there are persons who dare not give utterance to their own honest convictions; it is a relief to know that there are men among us whose steadfastness to principle is a rebuke to pretension, who owe no allegiance to imposture, who will place no offering upon the gilded altar of falsehood, but who will at any sacrifice maintain the principles of truth and justice.

Among such are the truly noble of mankind, and among such could always be found John Valiant. No man could be more unobtrusive in manner. He never courted the great, or pandered to the whims or prejudices of the multitude; he never sought popularity by wantonly declaiming against persons in high position, or by attributing exclusive virtues to those who tilled the soil, or were obliged to work for their daily bread; and he cared

not how a man shaped or formed his gods, whether he prayed to a hundred, or none at all, provided he was influenced or governed by the great principles of humanity.

Although the visit of Mr. Valiant to Ireland had been unsuccessful yet he had gained much correct information as to the great cause of the rival dissensions, and disturbances which existed in that country. The Rev. Seth Graham, upon whom he called in the hope of hearing something of his son, he found as a man, to be genial and hospitable as most Irishmen are reputed to be; but as a priest, upon the subject of religion, or of Orangeism, he was as thoroughly impervious to reason as a lunatic. No one could, however, doubt the sincerity of this clerical gentleman; if he was astray, he was sincere in his error; in fact Mr. Valiant found this quality of sincerity to prevail among people of every creed, among Orange, and among Green, even among those holding the most conflicting opinions, in the Emerald Isle.

Upon making inquiries about his son, Mr. Graham could give him no information whatever. He told Mr. Valiant that he had evidently been misinformed; he stated that a Hindoo lady, one of his converts whom he had baptized, and whose Christian name was Sarah, had requested permission to accompany him to Europe, she had a little boy, named Hemar, with her, whom she called her nephew, and who was another of his converts; that when they landed in England the lady had suddenly disappeared with the boy; and that although he, Mr Graham had made diligent inquiries, he had never heard anything reliable concerning either of them. A rumor, he said, had reached him that a woman described to resemble Sarah was seen in conversation with some strolling gypsies; to this story he could scarcely give credence. She might have met with friends; for a long time he had hoped to hear from her, but he was now under the impression that she must have had some motive for remaining away; what that motive was, he was unable to determine.

Upon hearing this, it occurred to Mr. Valiant that the story of her interview with a band of wandering gypsies might be true. He knew that there was a kind of affinity between the gypsies and the Hindoo race, he had heard something of the short stay of a strange gypsy woman upon the Heath, and he determined upon his return to England to make some inquiries about her at the place where he expected to get the most reliable information.

Before he left Ireland he induced Mr. Graham and his wife to permit the little Hindoo girl Sheva to return to India. The missionary was now convinced that she would never retain Christian truth, that the instructions which had been given her in Christian doctrines had been a mere waste of words, and that some evil spirit must be present to interfere with her reception of divine knowledge.

Mr. Valiant did not attempt to erase this notion of Satanic frustration from the mind of the missionary; he well knew that when prayers and godly efforts had signally failed in bringing the heathen under Christian subjection, it was an old refuge among clerical ambassadors to lay the blame squarely upon the shoulders of that imaginary being, the great enemy of mankind, who it is often alleged has at certain times and seasons, or under certain circumstances, sufficient power to counteract holy influences, and to induce the partially enlightened pagan to relapse to his old superstition, to turn from the severe countenance of the Mosaic God and to gaze again upon the benevolent face of Christna. It is recorded that, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." *

"Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts lest they should believe and be saved." †

If the gospel be so indispensable to "fallen man," why is

* Mat. 13:19.

† Luke 8:12.

it that millions are yet unenlightened, and their eternal happiness or misery left to depend upon the frail and uncertain efforts of a few missionaries who are generally unacquainted even with the language of those to whom they are sent? If conversion to Christianity be necessary to insure the salvation of the human race, it would seem that there must be but little justice or impartiality in the contingent and very tardy mode of enlightenment to which the Deity is assumed to have given his approval; for still after the expenditures of vast sums the progress of missionary enterprises is at best but very doubtful, and in numerous cases it must be admitted, that by following the example of Christian people, many, very many, of the so-called converted pagans are morally in a worse condition than they were before they heard a word of the "joyful tidings," and it may yet require some Parsee priest, some grey haired Brahmin, or some Buddhist missionary, to lead them back to the purity and simplicity of life from which they have departed. With all the means and appliances at the disposal of Christian propagandists, judging by their progress among the heathen during the last fifty years, what long years must yet pass before the Bible is accepted—if ever accepted—as the sole standard of truth; and if the words of that Bible be the infallible words of divine inspiration, what unborn generations must yet be hurled down to eternal perdition for the want of that spiritual knowledge, which it may not be in their power to obtain. Oh! what a sad conclusion must follow from such orthodox exaction; what a libel upon the beneficence of a Great Creator must be the inevitable teaching of the arrogant, costly creed of Christendom.*

If it can be imagined that the Almighty can sanction

* Many Christian priests wish to avoid such an inhuman result and try to explain that there may be some way of escape, or some lesser condemnation for the unconverted, while others of the ordained point almost exultingly to chapter and verse, and assert that unless a man repent and be baptized, unless he be born again, unless he believe in Christ, there can be no salvation: and nothing for him but "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." This must

the perpetual torture of even two-thirds of the intelligent beings whom He is said to have created, because unfortunately they do not happen to have been made acquainted with His rigorous laws, and with the peculiar mode of salvation which it is said He has prepared for the very few that may escape, it may be also inferred from that which we read, in what true Christians accept as the pages of inspiration, that, though His invitation and His promise is "unto all," yet for some inscrutable purpose He is willing that many through ignorance should be lost; and even aids to ensure their destruction. In those very pages it is written: "He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them."* "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."† Even the same inspired record might lead us to suppose that if Satan is permitted at certain seasons to exercise his wicked control, the power of the Almighty is sometimes limited and that he is not always omnipotent; as an evidence of this we read: "And the Lord was with Judah, and He drave out the inhabitants of the mountain, but *could not drive out* the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron."‡

The power of the apostles was also uncertain; though they were told that, "all things are possible to him that believeth," and that by faith they should be able to perform miracles, yet they had reason to think that faith alone was not always sufficient to do that which they desired. When after a trial of their power they failed to eject a certain "dumb spirit," upon inquiry as to why they "could not cast him out," they were informed by

be the prevailing opinion of those who best understand the Christian scriptures, else why should appeals so pathetic be made at missionary meetings for the "perishing heathen."

* John 12:40.

† Thes. 2:11.

‡ Judg. 1:19.

their Master that, "This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting."* It is, however, an unquestionable fact, that there are certain missionaries, like Seth Graham, who are thoroughly satisfied that when they fail to convert or to reform by the usual orthodox course, Satan must be in some way the obstructing cause; and as Mr. Graham was strongly of this opinion, he was energetic in expressing his belief that the "Devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour," that he had already devoured a good many, and would yet make away with Sarah and Hemar, his apostate runaways, and would most probably disappear in sulphurous flames with little Sheva herself.

As has been noticed, that poor child knew Mr. Valiant at the first glance upon the day of his arrival at the missionary's house. She had often seen him in Bombay, and had heard of his goodness, and young as she was, she had sufficient confidence to make her appeal to him to be restored to her parents. Mr. Valiant pitied her forlorn condition, he spoke words of kindness to her in her native tongue, she wept when she heard his soothing voice, for she felt that the hour of her deliverance had come; and to make sure he went at once and paid her passage to Bombay, and placed her in charge of a friend on board a vessel bound for India.

Upon his return to the Heath he was greatly pleased to find that the people whom he had trusted, and whom he wished to serve, had steadily advanced during his absence. The labor which wins a fair reward was producing a sure reformation among those who once fancied that constant industry was the only resource of such as were oppressed and despised. Each man upon his little plot of ground felt as if he had a home of his own at last, felt sure of its possession, and seemed not only desirous to cultivate the soil, but to add certain simple embellishments as if to make his plain abode more attractive. Nothing at the

* Mark 9:29.

time could have been more cheering to Mr. Valiant than the aspect of affairs upon the Heath; industry and contentment seemed to prevail, and wherever he made his appearance he was warmly greeted as the common benefactor.

Though rather depressed in consequence of the want of success in his search for his son in Ireland, still he was not at all inclined to despond, and after a hurried inspection of the works he had commenced around the place, and of those for the restoration of the Manor House, he thought it best to visit Zingari in order to ascertain from her whether she or any of the gypsies knew anything of the woman and the boy who had suddenly disappeared from Mr. Graham on the day of his arrival in England.

When Mr. Valiant made his appearance at the gypsy camp he was surprised to find that they had made preparations for his reception as if he had been a prince of their own kind. Who could have informed them of his coming? He had told no one; yet before he had reached the place he was met by gypsy men and maidens in holiday garb; his ears were greeted with music; and children presented him with little bunches of wild flowers which they had tastefully arranged. When close to the camp he saw an arch of evergreens, and, as he passed under this, he was received by Zingari in the most cordial manner; she then conducted him to her tent in which an excellent repast had been prepared. After he had partaken of this refreshment, he addressed his entertainers, he said something kind to almost every one present, and distributed little gifts among the children and then, in a little time afterward, he was left alone with his old gypsy friend. In a few words Mr. Valiant explained the object of his visit. As he knew Zingari and mostly all upon the Heath had heard of the loss of his son, he merely stated to her, that his search in Ireland had proved unavailing, and that perhaps the strange woman who had left the care of her spiritual tutor, Mr. Graham, might be the same that had so unexpectedly come among them. Zingari

was greatly interested in what he said, and her positive assurance that his son was still alive, had a most inspiring effect upon him at the time. He did not however wish to be considered a believer in a soothsayer, or in predictions, or in the power of any human being to effect anything supernatural; he was one on whom it would be difficult to impose, but it was not long before Zingari's manner and acts satisfied him that the woman he now consulted was really possessed of extraordinary powers.

"The one you seek," said Zingari "has been here, her name is Maheel, you may have seen her perhaps in India; and you may yet hear more of her history. She knew you well; she feared that you might have heard of her crime and that you might be her detective; and she was startled when your name was first mentioned on the Heath. Through a feeling of jealousy and vindictiveness, she robbed an Indian mother of her son, and tried to reduce him to the condition of an English slave—such as we had here before you came among us. Our people saw that he was one of their kind; with my assistance they brought him back, and have thereby saved his life. Were it not for this he might like others be worn down by years of terrible servitude. He is still here with me, but he is not your son, though the child of an English father—see for yourself."

She then called, and the little boy Hemar entered and stood before them. "You have seen him before," continued Zingari, "he was present with me when you first entered the old Manor House on your return from India."

"I now remember," said John Valiant, "but," said he after having looked at the boy closely, "his face singularly resembles one I must have seen somewhere."

"This is the boy," said Zingari, "that was brought from Bombay as a convert by your missionary friend, Graham." Mr. Valiant, evidently perplexed, still gazed upon the boy's face: "Whose features can those possibly be," said he at last in a reflective mood—"not of any one in England?"

"Yes of one now in England," calmly replied Zingari.

"Impossible, impossible my good friend, quite impossible." replied Mr. Valiant hurriedly, "you cannot tell me this."

"I tell you so," said she, "those features remind you of an old friend, even of one whom I have not seen since he was little beyond the age of that boy himself."

"I cannot think it at all likely," replied he in an incredulous manner, "there can be no person that I know of in England to whom the lad bears the slightest resemblance; and as you know not who my intimate acquaintances have been, how can you tell anything about this old friend as you call him?"

"Shall I give you his name?" inquired the old gypsy woman.

"You might perhaps make a shrewd guess," replied he, "but if you will give me one particular name it will much surprise me."

"I shall," said she giving him a strange look, "and in doing so I shall neither *letter* it, nor *halve* it, but *begin*."—In using these words slowly and distinctly there must have been some significant meaning which caused him to look for a moment sternly at the woman before him. Zingari seemed not to notice his manner, but took out her little slate and laid it upon a small table, with a fragment of pencil between the table and the slate. She then placed her hand upon the slate, and looking thoughtfully at it for a short time, said, as if addressing some one else: "Will you give me that name?" A slight tipping noise was then heard, then the sound of writing, and when that ceased she lifted the slate and read; she then whispered into his ear, and he at once looked quickly around at her in actual amazement. Zingari smiled at his blank astonishment, and then as if to bewilder him still more, she held the slate before him, and he read in a writing which was most familiar, the signature, "Charles Maidston."

"Well," said he, after an effort to recover from his surprise, "that is wonderful—the name although not the

handwriting. It must have been on the slate all the time; who could have written it?"

"You may believe me," said Zingari, "that that name was never before on my slate. I did not write it, nor can I tell you how or by whom it was given, but there it is. You I know are a doubter where others are credulous; you are a skeptic, nay, an unbeliever in all religious creeds; you are an honest but determined opponent to supernatural pretension, and to imposition of every kind, and I would dislike very much to be suspected even for a moment by you, whom I believe to be so great a lover of truth. I have not deceived you, there is the name," said she pointing to the slate, "known here but to yourself: there is what you might take to be the handwriting of your friend; now let me see if I can tell you something relating to him, and I shall afterward try and give you another and perhaps a more satisfactory evidence of a power or influence about which you yet seem to know but very little; about which I have scarcely any knowledge myself."

The old woman then seated herself on a mat, she placed a hand over her closed eyes to exclude the light; she remained silent for a short time, and while her visitor was speculating as to her intentions she spoke out slowly: "I see a traveler near the sunset hour in India, he is on his way from Chunar to Mirzapore. The temple of the Goddess Kali is almost in view; he is wearied and anxious to get to the end of his journey, and though he is alone with his Kitmutgar,* who accompanies him, he never once thinks of robbers, or of the terrible Bhuttotes or Lughaees † that still infest the neighborhood. Now while he dismounts, and waits to permit his horse to drink at a small stream, he is suddenly seized from behind; his hands are held, and a cord is pulled tightly around his neck; he is about to fall to the ground; there is a shout, and he is rescued from the deadly grasp of a band of

* A kind of head-servant in India.

† Stranglers and grave-diggers among the Thugs.

Thugs by a company of Vaishyas * that rush forward; and these are under the direction of—him whose name is yet on that slate.”

An exclamation of surprise here escaped from John Valiant.

“Stay,” said Zingari, hastily, “let me see the rest. Next day, the rescued one parts with the friend that saved his life; he is now returning to his Bungalo; he meets a poor Pariah, who ventures to address him—he gives him alms. The Pariah utters a prayer for his benefactor: ‘As thou art not afraid of my shadow, be assured that it shall not leave the unclean. Thou shalt ever prosper, but thou canst not meet thy friend again until thou hast crossed the sea, and rescued in return the life of his very dearest friend.’”

“Amazing!” said John Valiant, starting up like one electrified. “Great heavens, my good woman—that is if you are really a human being—how has this come to your knowledge? I am that rescued traveler. I was saved from the murderous Thugs by that very man—the only time I was ever so close to death—and you know, or have seen all this which I thought was unknown to any human being, save those who were then present.” He then stood looking with astonishment at the grey-haired woman, as if she had been one raised from the dead to make such a revelation.

Zingari, however, still sat quite unmoved by his great surprise, and by the time he had grown a little more collected, she stood up and said: “Before you make that rescue, or before you meet that friend again, you may be nearer to death than you were at the time of your own deliverance.” She then drew close to him, and drawing out her singular mirror, held it before him. “I want you,” said she, “to look at this. I told you I would try and give you what you might consider a more satisfactory evidence.”

* Merchants or traders.

Mr. Valiant who really felt like one awakened from some singular dream looked listlessly at the round piece of metal which the old gypsy woman held clutched in her hand. The surface appeared at first view dim as usual; they both looked at it stedfastly for over a minute, still it remained clouded, and though he had now scarcely a doubt of Zingari's sincerity, and perhaps of her ability to do some wonderful things, still he could not help thinking that in this she might herself be the victim of a delusion; as it was even the old woman became a little disconcerted as if anticipating a failure at a time when she was most anxious that the test which she wished to give should be most conclusive. They still looked; at last the edge of the mirror began to get clear; the dimness wore slowly away until its surface, even to Zingari, appeared to be unusually bright and glistening. Thus it remained for a time longer and nothing yet could be seen upon it except the shadow of some passing cloud. John Valiant, now more doubtful turned to look at his old gypsy companion, but quick as his glance fell again upon the mirror, he observed a face—a woman's face—one of the most interesting, if not to him one of the most beautiful which he had ever beheld. So absorbed did he become with the fascinating picture, that he actually held Zingari by the arm lest she should withdraw from his view that which seemed to rivet his gaze, and to produce the strangest, yet the most pleasing emotions. The old gypsy woman herself was somewhat surprised; she knew the face at a glance; it was not that which she wished to have appear, but when she saw the effect which it produced upon one so guarded and undemonstrative as her visitor, she was secretly pleased and wished to indulge the eager gaze of the observer to the fullest extent.

“Beautiful! Who is this? Who is she?” said he at last without removing his eyes from the mirror.

“Another friend,” replied Zingari, “whom you have never yet seen; but whom you may shortly meet.”

“Another friend! Can it be so? I would be glad, would

be delighted to find such a one now. Strange," said he, still gazing on the picture, "there is the very same expression—And you know her?" said he turning to Zingari.

"Yes, ever since her childhood. She has been my friend, and one of the dearest friends of him whose name you have seen on that slate."

"Not his wife surely—not his wife?" said Mr. Valiant, in a tone of eager inquiry that brought a smile upon the face of the old gypsy woman.

"No not his wife; the wife of no man yet," replied she, "happy will be he who can hereafter claim her as such."

He then turned to look at the face again but lo! it had disappeared; his disappointment was plainly visible; and the surface of the mirror was again dim even in the sun light which filled the wide opening of the spacious tent.

In his intercourse with women John Valiant had always been diffident. Though his face was one which would have readily enabled him to win his way in affairs of the heart, yet there was not the least forwardness or assurance in his disposition; while at all times he showed the greatest deference to the softer sex, he felt under perfect control in their society; and never perhaps did an impulse toward them betray him into an act or expression beyond that of the most rigid propriety. Yet now, even in the presence of the old gypsy woman, he was conscious of having exhibited a weakness—if such it can be called—which made him feel rather abashed. His gaze of delight, his expressions of admiration, his eager inquiries, told their own story, and led him to imagine that he had been singularly unguarded, and that his indiscretion, or want of caution, would perhaps be fully understood; or, it might be, misunderstood by Zingari. He would above all things at the moment have liked to know the name of her whose image had so suddenly impressed him, but he dare not ask, he could not venture to utter an inquiry; and then deeming it prudent he tried to affect indifference, but his attempts in this direction were a positive failure. Yet though his awkwardness of manner and utterance had a

significant meaning for Zingari; she merely smiled at his discomfiture, and for some reason offered no further information concerning one in whom she knew he felt so interested.

As it was, he had a pregnant theme which enabled him to revert to another matter, and escape from his embarrassment—what of his son? He did not even yet believe that Zingari could give him reliable assurance of his safety, or point in the direction in which he might be found; yet still his impulse was to inquire. There are cases in which it affords a kind of relief to ask a question, even when one scarcely expects to get a satisfactory reply. The old gypsy woman had little over an hour since told him that his boy was yet living—this he was inclined to doubt and inclined to believe—but had she not since then made revelations actually astounding, and he would ask again.

Zingari saw that he was greatly troubled, and being most desirous of affording him some encouraging assurance, told him that her impression was that he would soon meet his son again, “though” said she in an under tone, “it may be in the midst of danger from which you both will escape with difficulty.”

In a short time afterward Mr. Valiant took leave of Zingari and his other kind gypsy friends. A horse was in waiting for him, and it was nearly run down when he left the Heath. He was obliged to go to London again, and on his way had business to transact at Pendell and he hurried to get to that village before dark. As he rode on he thought of that beautiful face he had seen in the mirror, and then of his old gypsy friend and of her very singular revelations. What he had heard and seen in her presence almost led him to believe that he was not in his right mind. He who but very lately would have scoffed at any reliance on witches or necromancers, was now, in his confused state of mind partly under the impression that he must have been, to some extent, bewitched or controlled. He had heard of spirit manifestations and of mediums,

and had been hitherto of the opinion that those were a superstitious delusion, and these a set of fanatics or impostors; he even still believed that many of the numerous clairvoyants and test mediums, and charlatans of Spiritualism that resort to towns and cities, and advertise to reveal secrets, and hold communication with the spirit world, were too often to be found among those who try to make a living by imposing upon the credulous. But what could he say of Zingari, who, without pretension of any kind, had given him clear evidence of a power that was to him inexplicable; and, much as it conflicted with old opinions and old prejudices he believed that it was but manly and just to acknowledge that she was no deceiver; that much, if not all of what he had witnessed that day, could not by any method of reasoning be attributed to the practice of any deceptive art; there might be, he thought, some possible mode of explanation, but as it was, he began to think there must be natural laws, physical and mental, not as yet properly understood, and which when better known must to a great extent change the views of many of the prominent scientists and philosophers that were already too dogmatic in establishing conclusions in accordance with their present scanty stock of knowledge.

When he reached his quarters at Pendell he found the people of the place in a state of great excitement. Some disaster had happened, and he could hardly get an intelligible reply to his inquiries. His host was not to be seen and those who hurried into and out of the tavern seemed to do so without any settled purpose. Anxious to know what had occurred he went in a few minutes to Sarah Af-ton's cottage, there he met old Stephen Gray who told him that the landlord of the inn and two boatmen, had, after breakfast that morning, sailed out on the bay toward the lighthouse, with the rector of Pendell the Rev. Mr. Morton; that some returning fishermen had seen the boat capsized by a sudden blast; the landlord and the two men being expert, had clung to the boat and were rescued, but

the rector could not be found, he had sank and was not seen to rise again; his body had been carried out to sea, and would not in all probability ever be recovered.

Was this to be the first dark scene in the fulfilment of Zingari's strange prediction? George Morton the rector of Pendell lying sepulchered in the deep sea, and uncoffined beneath the heaving waves.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE LOST FOUND.

FOR over a week after the sad occurrence on Pendell bay Miss Meade was unable to leave her room. The shock caused by the news of the sudden death of the Rev. Mr. Morton, had produced severe nervous effects which greatly prostrated her. She did not, however, wish it to be surmised that her indisposition was in any way attributable to that disaster, although she was now fully satisfied that were it not for the perverse infatuation of the Rector, and his uncurbed desires for her society, he might still be among the living. It was now plain, that the passion in which he had indulged year after year, was at last the cause of his destruction; and though she could have had no reason to regret his loss, though he had obstinately and persistently for a long period dared to harrass her with what she considered unmanly and offensive attentions, now, that she thought of his untimely end, of his bereaved family, of his unprepared condition for eternity, and of his body perhaps being tossed about upon the waves, dashed against the rocks, or lying entangled fathoms deep among the sea weeds, she could have forgiven all, and would have tried to forget the words and acts of him who had given her so much annoyance, were it but possible to restore him to his weeping wife, and to a life which he in a manner had forfeited.

On the morning of the fatal day on which the rector had lost his life, some person had informed him that she

had gone out on an excursion to the light house, and thinking he might have a good opportunity of meeting her there, he started off with the landlord of the inn and two boatmen for that locality. His information respecting Miss Meade's excursion was, however, incorrect, for instead of having left in a boat for the light house as he had been led to believe, she had walked out to visit a family that resided about two miles from Pendell. As it was, she could not reproach herself in the slightest degree for the course she had pursued towards him. She had never at any time, by word or deed, led him to imagine that his professions to her could be considered other than insults for which he would have been called certainly to answer, were it not that she had to curb her indignation, and even tolerate the presence of her persecutor rather than agitate her father by making known to him the actual course of conduct pursued by his clerical employer. O, how often during these periods of her humiliation did she wish for her absent brother; his presence would have undoubtedly relieved her from the hated attentions of the rector, and have quickly taught that Rev. gentleman the value of discretion when he came to know that she had such a protector so near. Now under a feeling of extreme depression she thought again and again of him who had been her earliest companion, and of his unaccountable silence. Charles Meade, her brother, had not been heard from for a long time, and the dreadful conjecture often arose that his death alone could be the cause of his apparent neglect. Letter after letter had remained unanswered and as her father and herself had been informed in the earlier ones which her brother had sent them that he was obliged to lead a kind of wandering life in India, they were in consequence of his neglect, or inability to communicate with them, unable to give the proper address to any letter they might wish to send him, and were often subject to apprehensions of the most painful nature. Then she would think of her poor aged father, of him whose life had been an almost constant struggle with difficulties,

whose duties had been nearly unceasing, and who in his decline was, mainly on her account, forced to deny himself the necessary relaxation which his health demanded. It was not long since that the unfortunate rector had plainly intimated to her—and partly no doubt as a threat—that her father was not able to perform his required duties, and that he was retained as curate of Pendell out of consideration for her. Who, thought she, is to be his next employer? Will my father be kept on to preach and to pray for a few years longer with his old parishioners? Will the greed of a new rector cause his salary to be reduced, or will he be thrown aside and superannuated and left to depend upon the pittance or charity which may be doled out by some needy clerical society? The bishop of the diocese, the Right Reverend Thomas Sumpter, has sufficient influence to get the rich living of Pendell sold to a friend at a low rate, or even presented to any particular favorite whom he may recommend. On whom will it be bestowed? Perhaps some aristocratic fop, some reverend *bonvivant*, or some newly ordained obsequious creature, may come among us as rector, to reap where he has not sown, to pocket yearly over eight hundred pounds sterling for his semi-annual visits, while some dainty young curate—a slip shod theologian—a ladies' man skilled in archery and familiar with croquet lawns, will be glad to come here and preach pure and undefiled doctrines on Sundays, and flirt about during the week days on a salary probably of less than one-tenth of that which his rector is to receive for the cure of souls at Pendell. Oh! thought she, what a monstrous system of injustice is the whole arrangement for the sale or presentation of Church livings—making merchandize of that which should be held sacred, inviting the attention of keen speculators, and courting investments from the most unscrupulous worldlings.

There was a time when Esther Meade would not have held such opinions respecting any thing connected with the Church, or with the management of its secular affairs, there were long years during which she would have dread-

ed to cast a reflection on the conduct or even on the motives of any of God's so-called servants, but she had seen enough lately to convince her that though the doctrines of the Church might be pure, though its liturgy and ceremonies might be scriptural, yet that its priests, more particularly those of the higher order, were as sordid, as intriguing, and as ambitious, as any other class of men, and that their assumption of superiority as being the "called of God," was simply one of the most flagrant impositions. A wonderful change had indeed taken place in her opinions regarding those whom she once considered as "the truly ordained successors of the apostles," and whose authority in scriptural or ecclesiastical affairs should be submitted to without a murmur. Now, however, she looked upon the majority of these pretentious reverends and right reverends in a different light, for as soon as her suspicions had been fairly aroused, she studied their characters and drew inferences from their conduct, and, from what she had discovered, had to conclude that many, very many of them were little better than what most of the poor of the parish designated them—"wolves in sheep's clothing; shepherds that remorselessly preyed upon the flock."

Pained as she was to be obliged to think so differently of the clergy of her Church, the great majority of whom she once believed to be beyond reproach, and every way superior to the inflated preachers of dissent, she was now willing to admit to the very few persons that had her confidence, that from undoubted evidence, ministers of the gospel were in some particular respects among the frailest of mankind. And then forced in a manner to such a conclusion, other considerations would follow which at times caused her great uneasiness. Can the doctrines which such men teach be true? can those jealous, wrangling, vituperative sects who are ambitious to have grand churches and costly decorations—even though the widow and the orphan should be houseless and hungry—and whose preachers delight to be seen and known of men,

can such as these, whose vain desires belie their professions, be in any degree called humble followers of any divine teacher, or the sole possessors of the only creed which can be claimed as the basis of pure and undefiled religion? Are such teachers at all necessary, or would morality and humanity be the gainers, were the whole race extinct? But here she was suddenly startled at her own approach toward skepticism, she dared not take another step in advance. Where could such dangerous reasoning lead her, but to that bleak unbelief which was said to have left thousands without a hope in the future; for her reading and reflection had almost always led her to suppose that disbelievers in revelation must be the most self-convicted and unhappy of all God's creatures.

One of the very few that ever had the confidence of Esther Meade, was old Sarah Afton. Sarah had long been made aware of the late rector's designs, and she had many a time warned her young friend of his presence in the neighborhood. In every difficulty of any importance, Miss Meade was sure to consult with this good woman; and now having sufficiently recovered from her late indisposition, she once more made her way toward Sarah's cottage.

"Ah, bless me, sweet child, but I'm glad to see you out again; why, deary, you look as well as ever. When Stephen was here yestreen he told me you wanted to go to the church again to-night to try the organ; better wait a bit longer; in another day or so it would be little risk and your music might be better."

"No risk now whatever," replied Esther, "I feel quite recovered, I told you when you called to see me two days ago, that if I could not pray for the soul of him who had departed, I must at least play a requiem to his memory; a requiem in proof of my forgiveness."

"Dear child, you could do naught else than forgive—'tis your nature. May God forgive him too! Rector Morton had much to answer for; his spirit may come again to the

old church when you play; if any spell can bring it back it must be your music."

"I feel anxious, mother, to let my feelings speak, and only through the organ can I truly tell my pity for his fate. I want to touch those keys, and should his spirit come I would that the music of my poor pardon could bring it nearer to eternal rest."

"God bless your affectionate heart, dear child! O, what a paradise this distracted world might have been if human creatures had forgiven one another just as you have forgiven this man who caused you so many hours of vexation and trouble?"

"Well, mother, let us only hope that he has found mercy; I will go to the church to-night with Stephen, and when I leave it, I shall try to forget forever the misconduct of him who can never injure another."

"Ah me, ah me," said old Sarah, "what a fate; who would have thought it! When I saw him pass here less than two weeks ago, a healthy man, but may be with bad notions in his head—I little thought when he was riding down that hill slope yonder, that he was so soon to find his grave under the waves way out in the Bay—my, my, my, may God preserve us all from such an end!" Then after a little reflection she continued: "But, deary, has your kind father returned from Storkchester, you must be rather lonely at the parsonage in his absence?"

"He has not returned yet," replied Esther, "he left yesterday morning and may not be back until to-morrow—he may return to-night. Some friends urged him to go on to Storkchester and call on the bishop; they got several signatures to some kind of a document in his favor; indeed I think nearly all in the parish signed it. Yet I fear it will be of little service; money, or the influence of some titled man of fashion, will of course be most likely to secure the appointment to the rectorship; my father who has been here so long only wants to try and retain his present humble position; he would like to be continued as curate; that's all he would seek—the people I know

want him—and he is gone to solicit his lordship to say something in his behalf.”

“Of course he will, of course he will,” said Sarah eagerly, “of course the bishop will help him.”

“But bless you, mother,” continued Esther with some touch of irony, “the bishop has, I suppose, too many weighty matters to settle, to allow his mind to be disturbed by such a trifling affair as my father would bring to his notice; beside his lordship might not like to interfere with the business arrangements—with the pounds, shillings, and pence matters—of the new rector, who may want some favorite to act as his curate at Pendell, or some very needy parson who may be glad to offer his clerical services for may be less than forty pounds a year; my father, you know, had sixty from Mr. Morton.”

“Old Sarah Afton remained thoughtful for a few moments and then exclaimed: “Deary, deary, such a thing could never be allowed; never. What! send him away who has been a kind minister among us so long, and let another take his place? Never, dear child, the people would never allow it! the bishop would never allow it! What is the bishop for, and what is the Church for, if such a thing could happen?”

“The bishop,” said Miss Meade calmly, “is one appointed to rule the people of his diocese, and to pay as little attention as he likes to their wishes. He lives in a palace, he is driven about in his carriage, and has servants in livery to attend him; he confirms some here and there; he ordains a few in his cathedral, and imparts his solemn blessing to the congregation in it on Sundays; he gives grand dinners and champagne; he dines out and drinks the richest wines; and at the end of the year he draws his princely salary of over six thousand pounds—how much our high-priest at Storkchester gives the poor out of that is, through his great modesty, only known to himself.”

“That’s what a bishop is for mother.* Now I shall tell

* See Note 14. An opinion of the Church of England bishops by the *Church Herald*.

you what the church is for. It will soon be no place for the poor or the humble; in every city and town in the kingdom it will soon be no longer a plain, simple edifice, but a structure of polished marble of vast and magnificent proportions and exterior; the interior will be gorgeous with windows of stained glass; with silken cushions, and carpets of the richest material; with costly statues of dead heroes, and dead prelates; with pictures, and with a profusion of texts and other decorations in silver and gold; it is to be a palace to which the noble, the wealthy and the titled can resort in all their pomp and glory, perhaps to exhibit the latest fashions, or to listen to operatic stars who are richly paid to chant the praises of God. Besides this, the Church will be, as it has long been, the mart for certain speculators, and a hive of wealth in which numerous clerical drones can fatten at the expense of the whole community."

"Deed, but you surprise me child," said old Sarah, scarcely able to comprehend all that had just been said.

"No, my poor simple friend," said Esther, "you know but little about these things; but they have been forced upon my notice for some time; they are also startlingly apparent to others. The whole Christian Church has been debauched by wealth; the very sects have been corrupted, and they try to vie even with us, and to rival one another, in their love for extravagant display; and all this though paupers increase, and the pleadings of the poor become more and more pitiful. But hear me," said she with increased energy, "there must be another revolution in England before long; and a greater than Luther must soon come with no half measures, but with a vast and sweeping reformation."

Sarah Afton still looked with surprise at the vehement manner of the young lady, and though she was somewhat in doubt as to the meaning of her hurried words, she was content to suppose that they related to the present uncertain position of her father, the curate. "I'm sure what you say is correct," said the sympathizing woman, "I'm

quite sure of that, but dear young lady, come what may—even the worst—your good kind father will not be without friends. I know of one who will be his friend, and who will not let him suffer at the hands of the rector, or bishop, or pope, or anybody else; a good man who has served us all since he came among us. But I heard you say that you had never yet seen him; that's strange, my dear; but now I remember you were away at the rector's in London when he came here first; and you were away when he called at the parsonage; but you will see him here soon and then I know you will like him just as well as we all do; even old Zingari the gypsy who is so particular thinks he is the finest man living."

This indirect allusion to one who had long been in Miss Meade's thoughts, and who she believed was the same person that Zingari also had reference to, caused a blush to spread over Esther's cheek while her old friend was speaking of him. The face that she had so unexpectedly seen in Zingari's mirror had made a singular impression; it was at times vividly before her; it even came to her in her dreams. Yet what was remarkable, even to herself, she somehow dreaded to make the least inquiry, lest she should be suspected of taking an unusual interest in the individual that all seemed to praise. At last she ventured to ask with suppressed voice, "Was Mr. Valiant here lately?"

"Ay dear, he was—let me see, a week—nearly two weeks ago; he was here the very day that the rector was drowned. He sat with us for over an hour in the gloaming, and he talked with me and Stephen about the rector and his sad end, and about your father, and about yourself—ay, so kindly too about *you*, deary; he even asked me what your face was like, and then what I told him about your sweet countenance, seemed as if to set him a thinking, and after that he sat there where you are now without saying a word for a long while; he did not say much more to us that evening but soon afterward went away. He must be back about this time, I think—Oh I know you will like him very much."

Esther Meade was looking out upon the shaded pathway through the diamond shaped panes of the cottage window; she was looking out vacantly, and could neither see the bay, the lighthouse, nor the church tower; all before her at the moment seemed to be vacancy. She felt her cheeks burning, and her thoughts becoming singularly confused. A strange palpitation and a dimness of sight brought on a feeling of weakness. She tried hard to appear calm, and to escape the notice of her old friend; and in a short time when she had become more collected, she changed the subject of conversation, and made some remark about her brother.

"There," said Sarah, "my dream is out! What do you think, deary? I dreamt last night about your brother Charles, and I quite forgot it until you mentioned his name. These dreams are strange anyway. I thought that I saw you and him out on the Bay, as you used to be long ago, and that a storm arose, and that great fishes put up their heads around your boat; and then you both saw rector Morton, who was lost, floating about on a plank, and that you pulled him in, and after a good deal of trouble, brought him safe to land. Now wasn't that a curious dream, and what can be its meaning?"

"Nothing of any consequence you may be sure," said Miss Meade, "I never pay much attention to dreams of any kind. A dream is but the shadow of the memory; it may give you the dim outlines of that which has passed; I scarcely think it will raise the veil to give one a glimpse of the future."

After some further conversation about her brother, Esther took her leave and went back to the parsonage in the hope that she would see her father return before sunset.

That night at the usual hour old Stephen Gray was again under the porch at the church door. It was gusty, and the rushing wind moaned through the cypress trees, and set the numerous willows growing around, to wave mournfully over the tombs and little mounds in the

grave yard. Esther came but she was not alone, she had met old Zingari in the dim pathway leading to the building, and they entered the church together.

In a few minutes afterward Esther commenced her requiem, and the listeners that heard her sad strains might have fancied that she was using her utmost skill as if to reanimate him who had been lately cast away. It came upon the ear like the faintest murmurs of grief, and then in waves of exquisite melody that would touch the heart of the most obdurate, and then came pitiful sounds, and tender syncopated passages like sobs, and plaintive harmony, that some would think ought to have made angels weep, or have stirred the dead that lay around the grey old sanctuary. But though angels may not be able to yield to emotions of sorrow, human beings have still the solace of tears, and old Stephen's eyes were filled when he thought of the sad fate of the rector whom he had known so long; and Zingari, who sat alone in one of the darkest corners of the church, was weeping, weeping again perhaps for Adrian and for her children.

And if the dead stirred not, or if the spirit of the lost rector could not appear, those wonderful sounds then borne away on the night wind which had now increased almost to a gale, must have been heard by some passing stranger and have lured him to the spot. Old Stephen who sat near the door, saw a person enter and stand listening like one enchanted by the mournful cadences and wonderful melody that filled the place; his features could not be seen in the gloom, and he stood aside, as if he did not wish to be recognized by any one present.

Before the requiem was ended, and during a pause in the musical composition, the gale was heard at its height, the old building seemed to tremble, and the hanging ivy was swept against the gothic windows. There was another pause, and during the interval the sound of a distant gun was heard on the Bay—terrible signal so near the midnight hour! A ship in distress! There, that dreadful boom again, and the stranger, who seemed to understand

the fearful meaning, rushed out at once into the storm.

On a particular headland, overlooking Pendell Bay, a number of persons had hurriedly collected. They had heard the distant guns, and people who reside near a dangerous coast can readily understand their appalling significance. The scene before them was terrific. The towering billows, as if madly bent on destruction, rushed wildly upwards as if determined to blot out at once the only star that dared for a moment to appear above the whirling demon-clouds of the desolate sky. There seemed to be a league among the terrible forces of the storm king—among the black monsters of the air and the frantic waves of the sea, led on by tempest or hurricane to rend the heavens and to uproot the foundations of the earth, and at the moment the fearful might imagine that no controlling power could ever again sweep away the hideous clouds from on high, or curb the infernal revelry of the deep, or silence the continued roar of the tumultuous waters.

What appeared to be a large ship, from her many lights which could now and then be seen, was yet far out, but from her drifting course was evidently unmanageable and fast heading towards the rocks. On she came, heedless as a maniac; on she came in the horrid uproar of the elements—recklessly onward; on before the gale—on, on, on, rushing and bounding frantically onward, as if eager to appease the ocean fiend by her sacrifice or self-destruction.

Most of those now assembled had met here, probably more out of eager curiosity to witness a disaster than, on such a night, to run a great risk by attempting to prevent it.

A few of a certain class who had often seen ships stranded or wrecked, now stole away from the others and lurking here and there by projections on the sides of the cliff, prepared to wait for hours, and to watch like vultures for the catastrophe; to wait for what the sea might cast up—for either jetsam or flotsam—ready, in this Christian land, to cut open a bale of silk, breach a cask of rum, or to

plunder the bruised and battered body of a dead sailor. In the midst of the principal group who stood together, two or three persons held great torches which threw a lurid and fitful light on the terrible scene before them, and while all seemed to be irresolute, one who was a kind of itinerant preacher stepped a little aside and with solemn but stentorian voice proposed prayer. He said, that, as those now far out on the deep among rocks and quicksands were evidently beyond all human aid, all present should ask the God of the storm and the tempest to come to their deliverance.

"Stay! no prayer now," cried a woman who hurried in among them in an excited manner, "try to deliver them first yourselves, and let God help them afterwards; and you," said she, addressing the preacher, "should show a good example, if you have faith that He who is said to have power to still the winds and the waves, will come to their assistance."

Not one yet moved at the bidding of her who had just spoken, but the preacher replied: "I have faith, but it may be for a wise purpose that this thing is to happen; should Providence, in His mysterious designs, bring this disaster on some—for nothing can take place without His consent—He will undoubtedly send blessings in abundance to others."

"Oh! cowardly prophet of evil!" retorted the woman, still excited, "if your God is all powerful, what wise or mysterious purpose can there be in a mandate to bring misery and destruction on human beings? Has He at this time changed His nature and become a demon, in order to prove His benevolence and to send blessings on others? Has He just issued His dread command to the elements to go on and destroy? Has He thus said to them in His fury: 'Awake, wild tempest of the night, and swell thy horrid throat in shrieks of frenzy! Blot out each lingering star, and wrap the heavens in gloom, and let thy spectral clouds rush on in tumult through the maddened air! Let the dark forest crash beneath thy tread; let tremb-

ling hills in fear appeal, and moaning peaks and mountains cower at thy roar! Startle thy mighty giants of the deep, and lash them onward in their furious course! O'erwhelm great ships and feed thy hungry billows with the dead, and let thy black destruction be complete by gulphing down alike in turbulent waves the virtuous and the vile."

"Think you, you praying coward," continued she, still addressing the preacher, "that your God is so like a fiend as to issue such a command, and if He has, have you the presumption to believe that your shouting or beseeching will induce Him to counteract it? Fool! you belie the Great Maker! If you wish to serve Him truly now, keep your supplications for another time, and go and make an effort to assist His creatures in distress!"

The preacher made no reply. The men around looked at the woman—it was old Zingari that spoke. She was well known to most present, and with some her words and wierd appearance at the time and place seemed to have produced the desired effect. A few men hurried away to render any assistance they could, but the preacher and a few others remained still fearful or undecided, or perhaps they were still anxious to put the prayer of faith to the test in the hope that One would come with mighty power, and say to the storm: "Peace, be still."

By this time the ship had swept past the lighthouse and was rapidly approaching a dangerous reef within the bay. She appeared to be a large Indiaman, and only one torn, fluttering sail could be seen, and one of her shattered masts hung over the side, rendering it still more impossible to change her course. Those on board appeared to exhibit the greatest coolness and daring in this extremity, but in spite of all efforts the ship seemed destined for destruction, and was borne swiftly onwards until at last she crashed upon the rocks about a hundred yards from the shore.

Then indeed it was that gallant men were seen rushing along the beach as if determined to run every risk in order

to rescue those on board the doomed vessel from the terrible fate that seemed to await them. A life-boat and one or two other boats were quickly manned and sent out, but owing to some mismanagement or to the heavy, dangerous sea that had to be encountered, the boats were speedily dashed back, and it was with great difficulty that some of the adventurous men were saved from a watery grave.

After another and another effort to get off the boats, it was found impossible to get outside the towering waves that rushed far up on the shore with terrific violence. Two of the ordinary boats had been battered to pieces, and most of their crews so severely injured as to render them incapable of attempting any further assistance. At this time, when many began to despair of being able to rescue a single soul, one who appeared to be thoroughly resolute and undaunted, got a few men together and after much trouble righted one of the boats and had it drawn some distance and launched again at a point where the direct rush of the waves was diverted from the beach by a ledge that ran out some distance. He then hastily chose four stout sea-faring men and entered the boat with them, and just as they had pushed off, a woman muffled up sprang into it, and at once seized the helm just as it was about to be taken by another. Whether the men were surprised at her daring or wished to get rid of her as an incumbrance, they discovered before they had proceeded many yards, that she was no novice in the situation, and that from her cool and fearless manner, and the skilful way in which she headed the boat in the plunging waters that she was likely to be of very great assistance to them in their perilous course. As the night was dark the person who was in command, and who served as a look out, had to kneel in the bow and to hold firmly on by the sides of the boat; the stout men labored hard, and yet it was with the greatest difficulty they could make any progress. Many who watched them from the headland feared when they disappeared at times that they were engulfed in the waves, while others trembling with apprehension occa-

sionally turned aside as if unable to witness a fresh calamity; and in a short time afterward, when the boat had become hidden in the darkness, very few present expected to see it ever return.

More than an hour had now passed, all on shore were in a state of dreadful uncertainty, and those on board the doomed ship expected every moment it would go to pieces, and that they should be hurled among the breakers. As it was, almost all on the ship had to cling to the rigging, for the vessel had struck so hard that it remained immovable as if wedged between monstrous rocks, and at intervals the sea dashed against it and swept its entire length of deck with great impetuosity.

At the very moment when hope had almost left every breast, a loud report was heard, a curving light was seen to rush through the air, from the shore to the ship; a line had reached it, a stout cable was with some difficulty hauled on board, and connection with the land at last established, through which nearly all on board were safely brought to shore.

However, before an individual was saved that night by the chance means now afforded by the cable, the joy and surprise of all was heard in one wild exclamation when the struggling boat, yet in great danger, was seen returning. The brave woman was still at the helm, every man was still in his place, and two or three women and as many children, taken from the wreck, were seen crouched down among them. Loud shouts of delight were again heard even above the storm; a number of persons rushed down and onward even into the surf to receive those who had so miraculously escaped; several torches gave sufficient light to see all that were in the boat; and when it was again dashed far up on the sloping beach, he who had held command was the first to step ashore drenched and bareheaded, the others soon followed, and while he was assisting out the heroine who had so skillfully kept the helm and guided them out and back on their perilous way, the covering fell from her head and revealed the features

of her whom he had seen in the mirror—the features of the woman of his dreams—the now pale but expressive face of Esther Meade! But it was not long pale, for quickly, even in the dim, flickering light, a blush could be seen to suffuse her countenance when she gazed in return upon the manly and noble features of John Valiant.

Just then he looked around, as if to glance at those whom he had helped to rescue, his eyes became fixed upon a dark haired handsome Asiatic woman who held a trembling boy by the hand. As soon as she observed him her gaze grew intense, she grasped his hand and muttered some words of surprise in a foreign tongue. “Good God! is it Ranee?”

“Yes,” replied she, “it is Ranee; you have saved her life—you have saved us both,” and then pointing to the boy at her side she said: “Yes, I am Ranee; and this is Edgar your lost son!”

CHAPTER XXX.

A LONG JOURNEY.

IT was three days after the death of the rector of Pendell before the idea occurred to any one of suggesting to the curate, that he might do himself a service by calling on the bishop, to solicit his recommendation to whoever might become the new incumbent of the parish. The Rev. Mr. Meade, in his simplicity, had never given the matter a thought. He had been curate of Pendell for more than thirty years, and had, as he fancied, served acceptably under different rectors in that parish. No one had ever uttered the least complaint against him; no one had ever accused him of unfaithfulness, and, though living in an age of wavering opinions, and even of positive doubt and disbelief, yet, like many other skeptical priests, he had never allowed his private notions respecting inspiration, or prophecy, or miracles to interfere with his duties, and had therefore never been called to an account by any clerical superior, for teaching false doctrines, heresy, or schism. What then had he to fear? He was, in his own opinion, still able to perform the duties of curate; he had never imagined that any one would accuse him of being too old, and, under these circumstances, he felt quite confident—quite secure of his position—and could not realize that, after his long services, he could be turned adrift to make way for a stranger.

Having listened to what his friends had to say, and having tried to convince them that their distrust was

altogether groundless, he consented that they should draw up a memorial in his behalf to the bishop, and get it signed; and he did this, as he did many other things, more to gratify his anxious well-wishers, than because he considered such a proceeding necessary. In every matter, however, of any importance, relating to the welfare of those depending on him, he was sure to consult his daughter; but as she was very much indisposed at the time, he said but little to her on the subject, yet he said sufficient to cause her to urge him to comply with the desire of his parishioners; for from what she had once heard the late rector say, she well knew that *he* would have had very little consideration for *her* father, who was retained as curate merely as a favor, or rather out of regard for her; and that as a new rector might be disposed to make a change, yet though the bishop might not care to interfere it was barely possible he might be induced to recommend her father were he to go himself and present the memorial.

Storkchester was forty miles from Pendell; forty miles and no railroad connection between these places. What a distance in the imagination of the curate! Mr. Meade was no traveler; he had never seen a foreign city, and during many years had seldom gone further than eight or ten miles from his own house, unless it were on occasions when he had to join with the clergy of other parishes as a kind of escort to the bishop, while on his visitations through certain parts of the diocese. The great distance to Storkchester was a perplexity to poor Mr. Meade. There was the regular stage, to be sure, he could go by that, but it did not pass until nearly noon, and then if the roads should be heavy, he would be dropped at a strange place long after midnight. What an unpleasant reflection! And yet there was something worse than all this—yes, actually worse—there was the expense; nearly half a guinea for an inside passenger, and then to be crowded, and crushed, and knocked about to make more room for babies and bandboxes. What food for doleful consid-

eration! A place on the outside would not, of course, cost so much, but just think, at his time of life, of having to cling to the seat alongside of the driver, even if he were so fortunate as to secure that position; and to have the cold wind, or perhaps the rain in his face, or finding a free passage through his wrappings and his thin surtout, caused him to shudder; and, worse still, what would it be were he obliged to try and climb and find his way to the top of the coach, and, while in that dangerous spot, to be stowed away among rollicking sailors, and others as bad, who might have no regard for his fear or trembling, and only laugh at his efforts to hold on to his rickety elevation; and be also compelled to listen to a round of uproarious songs, and a long love ditty by some drunken soldier returning on his furlough, and a chorus from all; and wild shoutings upon their arrival at every tavern or stopping place. The idea of such an experience harassed him very much; he would have willingly given up all notion of leaving home, if he could only convince his friends that his case was not urgent. Alas! poor man, what was he to do?

In this extremity, a neighbor came to his assistance, whose kind offer relieved him in a measure from the perplexed condition in which he had been since he had commenced to brood over troubles that he fancied must be incident to so long a journey. This good parishioner had business to transact in a little market town within ten miles of Storkchester, and he would be happy to drive his Reverence that far; and afterwards a chance might offer whereby he could get the remainder of the way without much or any difficulty. In addition to this, others of his friends, under the impression that his funds were rather limited, got up a little sum for him, quite sufficient to meet his expenses, and he was spared reflections of a peculiar kind by this timely benevolence.

As it was, therefore, destined that he should leave his home, great preparations were made. Old Sarah Afton had called to see Miss Meade, and suggested what to get

ready, and what might be necessary to pack up for his Reverence. A little trunk was filled, and the following is a fair inventory of most of its contents: His best suit, which, by good care, had been kept in a very tolerable state of perservation for the last ten years. Think of it, he might be asked to dine with his lordship and a select company of divines, and the curate of Pendell must, of course, appear to advantage; his finest shirt, starched and ironed to perfection, had ever so many wrappings to keep it spotless; there were cravats, handkerchiefs, and bands, and a pair of gloves that a rich bridegroom had once presented to him, that he had not worn for—oh, ever so long a time, all packed most carefully; then along with these, by the wise forethought of Sarah, a piece of nice cake was stowed away, and a small bottle of a peculiar cordial was snugly hidden, in case the curate, while in a strange place, might have an attack of asthma, or rheumatism, or cholera; and by the recommendation of Miss Meade, half a dozen of her father's best sermons were put in—not any of the second-hand productions which could be purchased for about a shilling apiece, but pious discourses which she had helped him to write—he might be detained over Sunday, and requested to preach in the cathedral, and it would be well to let a fashionable congregation hear, if for once in their lives, plain words which might humble the proud, and teach the wealthy how to serve God by exhibiting a more humane regard for such of His distressed creatures as needed assistance.

It was long beyond the curate's hour for retiring when the little trunk was at last packed, locked, and labelled; he looked at it complacently after the heavy task was finished, and put it almost tenderly aside in a corner of the room; and just before he extinguished his light and got into bed, he went and again examined the straps and the lock of that which contained his trifling bulk of baggage in order to be satisfied that all was secure. An early start in the morning was necessary, and he must rise betimes so as to cause no delay.

But poor Mr. Meade could get no sleep—not a wink; his brain was, as it were, in a state of commotion; he fancied himself already traveling over hill and dale leaving far behind him those he knew, and entering a land of strangers. And then when he got into the crowded city, how would he address his lordship; whom would he meet, and to whom would he be introduced in the episcopal residence; and what would be his feelings were he requested to enter the richly cushioned pulpit of the cathedral—a thing not unlikely—and stand before a city congregation as a preacher—his heart sunk at the bare idea! At the moment he would have most willingly given up all notion of leaving home, and relinquish a claim to a bishopric, could he only prevail upon his importunate well-wishers to let him remain.

No sleep for him yet! Would his good clothes be creased or injured in that trunk—his slippers had been forgotten, he must not leave them behind, he might be able to put them in his hat, or in his great coat pocket—Ah, but not in his hat, he must wear his best one all the way—what a pity! he had only worn it on very particular occasions, and had kept it as smooth and nearly as new as when Esther made him a present of it seven years ago last Christmas, and now it might get soiled on the road by dust or by rain even though he had half-a-dozen handkerchiefs tied around it. And those creaking boots were provoking; he had actually stamped in them all the way to and from church, and out around the lawn every Sunday for the last twelve months, still they creaked as bad as ever—he hated creakers—he would like to pass through the world quietly, without attracting much notice, but how was it possible for him to do so with such boots; the congregation were sure to turn their heads when he walked—or creaked—up the aisle, and if he had to preach in the great church at Storkchester, wouldn't they do the same. Poor, poor, troubled curate!

At last he slept; it could not fairly be called sleep; for he was as yet unable to give one genuine snore—his

dreams kept him almost awake. He had got to Storkchester: he had a pleasing interview with the bishop, and was invited to dine at his lordship's table; was introduced to ever so many divines who were well known to be equally skilful in the selection of a text or a bottle of wine, as occasion required; was not asked to preach in the cathedral; his clothes had become strangely renovated, his hat was glistening, and his boots were as polished yet as mute as a court chaplain; and, best of all, he had just returned home with the *living* in his pocket, and was being greeted by his friends as David Meade, D. D., rector of Pendell.

Alas! who would like to awake from such a dream? Yet it was all but a dream, and the good old curate had to turn his eyes once more from the mirage to the desert. He awoke after his uncertain slumbers just at the grey dawn, called the servant to get him something to eat before he started away, but he found that his breakfast had been already prepared. The morning was gloomy; there was a thick mist and he began to think of his hat. On the way he would most certainly get out once in a while and tramp and stamp on the wet grass by the road side in order if possible to mellow the hateful, discordant notes of his boots. There, the trunk was all safe, straps and lock all right; he would not open it again until he got to Storkchester, no matter what might have been forgotten. His daughter, though poorly, had got up before day and had seen to everything herself. What a breakfast he had; she looked wistfully at her affectionate old father as he sat eating alone at the little round table—a nice breakfast, but she could not touch anything—eggs, and toast, and coffee, and a tender piece of beefsteak, and some little delicacies to tempt his appetite. Esther had got all these things spread before him, he would require a good meal before he started, and he ate more than he needed to please her. Breakfast was scarcely over when a little two wheeled box, or cart, was seen before the gate—a two wheeled vehicle and an old grey horse; a curious seat for

two, and a place behind for the little trunk. What careful muffling he had. Esther's heaviest shawl across his shoulders and breast, and she took such a time to fix and tuck, as if to hold him as long as possible, unwilling at last to let him go.

"Why, my dear, you will positively smother me," said he with the faintest attempt to simulate anger in tone and manner, evidently desirous of overwhelming a far different feeling. He did not look her in the face, his eyes were turned in a different direction; he was going a far journey, an unusual event in his life, and he looked about here and there, extremely anxious to find something he did not want. At last he said: "My dear, I must have your brown gingham apron—a handkerchief will be too small—to tie around this. See, if it continue like this all day it will be ruined," and he took off his hat and carefully applied his cuff to its damp surface." Esther, more to please him than to satisfy herself, wound something more suitable and less conspicuous around the hat, and placed it on his head.

"If it is fine, you know, I can take this covering off when I please. Yes, I think this will answer; and now be a good child till I come back." These last few words of his sentence were those he would have used to her near twenty years before that, if he were going away when she was a little girl; she was a child still in his eyes, and to him the words seemed still appropriate. Then having taken a hasty leave, he hurried out of the house in a kind of defiant manner, and took his seat in the cart by the side of his companion. They had driven but a little distance, when he looked back, and saw Esther waving her handkerchief from an upper window. They drive on, and when they get to the top of the hill he turned again. Pendell is hidden in the mist, only the church tower could be seen; his eyes, too, must have been misty, for he could see nothing else in that direction, so he looked the other way and saw the long, dreary road before them, and resigned himself to his fate.

About five o'clock that evening they got to the little market town or village of Weyton, and put up at a small thatched tavern known as the "Three Swords," situated conspicuously at the cross roads in that place, where a famous battle had once been fought between Catholics and Protestants. They had come so far without any difficulty; the curate's appetite had wonderfully improved on the road, and he and his friend enjoyed the homely yet substantial dinner that had been provided. After the meal was over they sat and chatted by the fireside for an hour or longer; the landlord was good natured and communicative, and told them all about the place, and much about the great events that had occurred in the neighborhood during the last three hundred years; many of these so-called "great events" had been of the most cruel and bloody character, and strange as it then might seem, all of these related to the intrigues of inhuman kings and to the furious strife for power or precedence occurring from time to time among Christian sects. Having discussed these and other matters, Mr. Meade inquired whether there might be an opportunity of getting a ride in the morning as far as Storkchester, and though the landlord said in reply that he thought no such chance was likely to offer before the regular stage time, yet, that if the curate did not wish to travel by that conveyance and get late at night at his destination, his trunk could be sent on before him by the stage, and in the morning if he could do no better, why it would only be a moderate walk of ten miles; and, even by walking only two miles an hour he could get to the city early in the afternoon. Upon consideration Mr. Meade thought it best to be guided by the opinion of his host; the stage called about ten o'clock that night, it was crowded, but as drivers generally think that there is always room for another package or another passenger, the trunk was stowed away somewhere and sent forward.

The curate had a good night's rest, a good breakfast at an early hour next morning, and though the weather was

cold and rather windy, it was dry—his hat would not be injured—and he set out with a light heart for the city. He rested occasionally by the way, had a little lunch, admired some pleasant places, and on the whole, though rather tired, got on remarkably well; and, what added immensely to his satisfaction, before he had traveled seven miles, his boots had entirely ceased creaking—no more bewildering music from these instruments. After this, he got a ride for over two miles in a pedlar's wagon, and then had but a mile further to go; but here he met with a poor infirm soldier, lately discharged, hobbling along and carrying a heavy bundle, he assisted him to bear this to town, gave him a shilling for his dinner, and by one o'clock in the afternoon he got to the inn which the landlord of the Three Swords had recommended; his trunk was there safe and sound, he opened it at last, everything was in good order, and he forthwith changed his apparel, and, somewhat disconcerted, he made further preparations to call on the bishop. Feeling now fatigued, he rested for about an hour, and then having partaken of a little refreshment, he left the place for the Episcopal residence.

It was a stately building, with clusters of towering chimneys, that seemed to frown down upon others less elevated, which dared to look up at the same heavens as they did. An aristocratic structure, with heavy cornices, and great bay windows, in one of the most fashionable squares of the city. The polished massive door, lying open, was approached by a flight of marble steps, and at the foot of these the bishop's carriage was in waiting. How fortunate! his lordship must, of course, be at home, and he would be able to see him. When he had got about half way up the steps, a stylish looking footman appeared at the door, and just as Mr. Meade glanced into the long hall, he saw the bishop—who must have seen him—dart aside into an apartment, leaving abruptly a lady and other persons with whom he had been conversing, and then before he had got to the top of the steps, the great door was slammed to in his face.

Mr. Meade halted in surprise. That man, thought he, must have known me, why did he slam the door to when he saw me coming; the bishop must have seen me, strange that he should so suddenly go off without giving me a single nod of recognition; still, he is inside, the bishop is here, and I shall ask to see him; I may perhaps have been mistaken by him for some other person. Respectable looking applicants for relief are, no doubt, a heavy tax on his lordship's scanty resources. He rang the bell. After a few moments of suspense, the same footman cautiously opened the door—only sufficiently wide to put out his head: "His lordship is engaged, and cannot be seen to-day," tartly replied the man to Mr. Meade's inquiry.

"I have come a very long distance and would like to see the bishop on a very important matter. Will you be good enough to give him my name?" and he handed the person one of the cards upon which his daughter had so neatly written his address.

"His lordship, I tell you, cannot be seen to-day, he will see no one; he is engaged," said the stern footman, reluctantly taking the card, and quick as he drew in his head the door was again slammed. The poor curate was bewildered. "What can all this mean?" muttered he to himself, and while he stood there before the great man's gate in the chilly wind, and now holding the memorial which so many considered would have such weight with the bishop, his heart began to fail him; again he muttered: "What can all this mean; besides the bishop must have seen and recognized me."

The door still remained closed, he looked about undecided what to do; would he ring again? He was on the point of doing so when he heard the bolt drawn, and the bishop's secretary made his appearance.

"Ah, the Rev. Mr. Meade! Am so sorry, yes, sorry, quite so, but the fact is his lordship is—is really indisposed, yes indisposed; his physicians say so. Must transact no business; must see nobody. Was just going out for an airing when you called; has been ordered to do so.

Regret this very much Rev. sir—am sure you will excuse this, and some other time you can—”

The flippant secretary was emphatic, he did not finish the sentence, he left the curate to supply the necessary personal pronouns, as well as to supply other words wanting; he spoke rapidly, bowed repeatedly to the curate in the most complaisant manner, and rubbed his hands as if the raw air had already admonished him to retreat.

Mr. Meade looked at him for a moment in astonishment, he saw that the secretary, though very polite, was unswerving; the chilling words, and the still more chilling reception, if reception it could be called, had already had their due effect, and the poor curate, before he withdrew, thought he would make one more effort, and meekly said:

“I regret to hear of his lordship’s indisposition; will you be so good as to place this memorial in his hands, it may be of importance to me that he should see it at once. I shall leave for home early to-morrow, and would be glad to have his lordship favor me with a reply in the meantime.”

The polite secretary again bowed and took the paper; he was evidently glad to get rid of the suppliant curate on terms so easy, and he assured him in the same gracious manner, that, if at all possible, he would have the document presented, and if the bishop were able to give it his consideration, he hoped to have the pleasure of forwarding a satisfactory answer.

With the most painful feelings of disappointment, the old man turned away from the house in which he had but lately fancied that he might have been a welcome guest. O, how keenly he felt the footman’s insulting manner, the frigid courtesy of the secretary, and the evidently premeditated neglect and inhospitality of the wealthy bishop of the very diocese. Had he been a common beggar, he could scarcely have been more rudely repulsed. He was unfeelingly driven from the door that he had always hitherto believed was open for the courteous reception of even

the poorest and most humble of the clerical members of the Church. In the whole course of his long life, he had never been treated so heartlessly. The pleasing anticipations in which he had ventured to indulge with respect to an interview with his lordship, or to a place at his lordship's table, were ruthlessly destroyed, and, with downcast look, discouraged and humiliated, he walked away slowly and with wearied steps, having now different views as to the relation existing between the wealthy bishop of an English diocese, and a poor curate from such a parish as Pendell. Before he had retired that night, he received the bishop's informal reply to the address which he had left with the secretary for presentation.

"MY DEAR MR. MEADE: I regret very much that the memorial in your behalf was not forwarded to me sooner. Arrangements have been completed whereby the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, one of my chaplains, will succeed to the living at Pendell; and, as rector, he had already appointed my nephew, the Rev. Mr. Sofin, lately ordained, to the curacy of Pendell parish in your place and stead. I shall be happy, however, to assist you in any other way.

"Faithfully yours,

"STORKCHESTER."

The memorial not forwarded sooner, and the late rector not yet a week dead. Ah, thought poor Mr. Meade, what a heartless letter, what an empty pretext to deprive me of my only means of support. After so many long years am I to be thus dispossessed of my curacy, separated from my kind parishioners and sent away from my old home, in order that the bishop's nephew may be appointed in my place? Alas, alas, what a scheme of injustice to be planned and executed even in the very bosom of the Church!

Alone and in a strange place, without Esther near him, or one kind friend to speak a word of comfort in this hour of trial, he sat for some time, bowed down and afflicted, with the bishop's letter spread before him; he could not read it again, for the page seemed blank to his gaze; thus he sat, and tear after tear dropped upon the gilt-edged paper, as if to obliterate its contents; and when at last he

laid the cruel letter aside and retired for the night, he wept himself to sleep after the manner of a poor troubled child.*

* See Note 15.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OFFER OF A NEW PARISH.

NEXT morning, before the curate left Storkchester, he heard of the wreck of the Indiaman that had occurred in Pendell Bay. Previous to this information, he was anxious to leave the city in which he was a stranger—in which his own received him not—to shake the dust from his feet, and never to see the place again; but this startling news made him still more desirous of reaching home in order to learn the particulars of the disaster. Had he been aware that his daughter had run a great risk in her humane endeavors to reach the fated ship, and rescue a few fellow-creatures, it would have been a cause of great uneasiness; as it was, he knew nothing of this until he got back to Pendell. In his haste to get home, he paid out most of the little sum of money he had with him for a seat in the stage, and he arrived at his own house about dusk in the evening. When he entered his old home again, it was with mingled feelings of pleasure and of pain; he was glad to meet Esther and others of his household, and grieved when he remembered that he must probably very soon leave it in order that some stranger should occupy it in his place, sit in its little parlor, pace upon the pleasant lawn, and muse under the old oak in the shade of which he himself had so often sat to think of his troubles, to contemplate with respect to the future, and to speculate upon the perplexing religious doctrines to which he had been obliged to give a formal assent.

Painful impressions would have affected him more at the time were it not for the emotions by which he was influenced when he considered the terrible danger which Esther had escaped, and now that it was over, he felt no inclination to reprove her for her temerity, but rather disposed to look on her with pride, and to speak of her conduct in terms of parental exultation. And then associated with this noble girl in the humane effort, was that very man respecting whom nearly all were so ready to speak in terms of gratitude." How strange that he and Esther should have met for the first time under such circumstances, and that she should not have even known who he was until they had escaped all danger and achieved their purpose; and until she had heard his name, as well as her own, mingled in the shouts and cheers which greeted them on their return.

This is partly what the curate had gathered from his daughter's recital of the event, and he could then perceive that she not only entertained a high opinion of Mr. Valiant, but seemed greatly pleased when referring to the glowing words which he had addressed to her before those who had been rescued, as well as in the presence of others who had assembled after they had safely landed from the life-boat; she also appeared equally gratified when she informed him that Mr. Valiant had called at the parsonage to make kind inquiries after her, and had called again that morning, in company with his son, to see the foreign lady whom she had invited to stay for a time with her, and with whom he appeared to be well acquainted; and how this lady was struck with the resemblance which Esther bore to one of this lady's most particular friends; and then she depicted the delight of Mr. Valiant, as well as the gladness of all, when this same lady restored his son; and she alluded to Mr. Valiant's princely generosity toward the brave men who had accompanied them to the wreck, as well as his kind attention to those that had been saved from the ship.

As the foreign lady, who wished to be known as Ranee,

had already retired—she was still suffering from the shock she had received at the time of the wreck—the curate was unable to see her that night, and add his welcome to that so readily given by his daughter, he was, however, greatly interested in what he had just heard, and he was as much rejoiced as any one could be to learn that Mr. Valiant had found his son in a manner so singular and unexpected; and that this boy was one of those whom Esther had assisted in saving from a dreadful death. Indeed, so absorbed was he in listening to his daughter's vivid account of the wreck and the rescue, that he had for the time altogether forgotten that which an hour or two before had prayed so heavily upon his mind; and it was not until all others in the house, except Esther, had retired, that he related to her his trials and disappointments in the city of Storkchester.

When he had finished the little story of his wrongs, he was surprised to see how little affected she appeared to be by what had occurred; and he was rather gratified to discover that his daughter took a more hopeful view of their circumstances than he supposed she would. One might fancy that she was quite indifferent as to whether she should hear of his dismissal, or of his retention and advancement; and instead of being discouraged by what her father had told her, her words, in reply, were such as to have an inspiring effect, and her manner at this peculiar time had a most cheering influence; and though Mr. Meade felt that those vested with power and authority in the Church, had left him, after long years of service, to struggle with adversity as best he could, yet while Esther was with him, and as long as she could be so confident, he would try to believe that the future might not be so dreary as the clouds before him seemed to portend.

Early next day, several of his parishioners called to learn how the bishop had received the memorial, and whether his lordship had given it his favorable consideration. Some present were, in fact, under the impression that the bishop might be so influenced by what had been

said in favor of the curate, as well as by his own personal knowledge of his excellence, that there was a probability of Mr. Meade's advancement to a vicarage; and a few were even sanguine enough to imagine that his lordship would at once see the justice and propriety of lending his powerful aid toward getting him appointed rector of the parish; all, however, had not the slightest doubt but that he was still to remain among them in a clerical capacity of some kind for years longer.

The curate was of course much pleased to receive these kind friends, and though he felt sad at the moment, yet he could not keep from smiling at their earnestness of manner, and the warmth of feeling that he had no doubt would have become joyful excitement were it known that he had actually been dignified with a bishopric. Even then, good man, knowing their affection for him, he disliked to undeceive them; he would have kept the unpleasant truth if he could, but as they would soon hear all officially, he thought it would be best for him to explain at once how matters stood.

As it was, some had already begun to suspect that all was not right; they saw by the curate's subdued demeanor that he probably had information of an unpleasant kind to communicate; there was something in his look of mild resignation that had a depressing effect, and after he had quietly put on his spectacles and read out slowly and distinctly the bishop's harsh epistle, there was a deep silence until he said to them, with tremulous voice: "Therefore, my good friends, you must understand from what I have just read, that I am your curate here no longer."

For a few minutes those around him looked as if thunderstruck by this intelligence; some jumped at once from their seats with a cry of indignation, others shouted: "down with the Church, down with the bishop, down with everything," while one, more excited and profane than the rest swore out roundly against the Church and its mitred authorities, and finished by saying: "Damn the

bishop, and damn Vanscourt and his fop of a curate—they maun all go to hell; we will keep thee here for our curate in spite o' the deevil an' the bishop too; let 'em coom here an' try it if they dare; an' if all goes to all we will all turn Methodees an' 'ave thee for oor preacher." Other expressions equally vehement were used on the occasion, and while the curate's eyes were filled with tears, and stout parishioners stood around him with clenched fists and flushed faces, another person entered the room, and when the curate looked up he recognized a truly sympathizing friend in John Valiant.

In a little time every thing was explained to the new comer; they would have him hear all. The bishop's letter was again read, and again threats and expletives of no pious kind werə freely used; and though Mr. Meade advised them to submit quietly to what was inevitable, yet they remained still indignant, and after they had left the room their voices could be heard outside in loud and angry threats and denunciations, as if under the foolish impression that by such clamor they might possibly be able to intimidate the bishop, or oblige him to restore Mr. Meade to his old position among them.

Mr. Valiant did not require this additional evidence to be assured of how highly the curate was esteemed by his parishioners, and he took the opportunity of telling him that he was not sorry that he was to be relieved, were it only for a short time, from his clerical duties, because he, Mr. Valiant, was desirous of having the benefit of his advice and experience with regard to an institution which he wished to establish on the Heath; an institution for the culture and amusement of the residents of that place.

Mr. Meade, who had been touched by the devotion of those of his parishioners that had just left him, now felt that an influential friend had come to offer encouragement and that there was something in his proposal which might be intended not only to keep him from harassing thoughts as to his future prospects, but also for his pecuniary advantage; it was in fact a delicate way of hinting that his

services would be required on the Heath, not as a missionary, but in a situation which perhaps would be to him far more useful and agreeable, and for Esther's sake he would gladly serve in any such capacity. The curate in reply assured Mr. Valiant that if he could be of any assistance to him in his efforts to advance the condition of others, he would gladly place his humble services at his disposal. He had been among the people of the Heath time after time, when few others in a clerical position would have ventured to visit them, and now that they had been so much more civilized, he could go more willingly among them as an instructor. After a few words on other subjects Mr. Valiant took his leave, having accepted an invitation to call and spend the evening with them.

Mr. Meade had not yet seen Ranee, and she now entered the apartment in which he was, accompanied by Esther. She made a low courtesy and seized and kissed the curate's extended hand. He received her in the kindest manner and assured her of a welcome, sympathized with her on account of the suffering she must have lately endured, and congratulated her on her wonderful escape. He was greatly interested in this stranger; she was well known to Mr. Valiant, and had no doubt secured his lasting gratitude by having been the means of restoring his son in a way so remarkable; and as there was yet a mystery about the matter, Mr. Meade, as well as his daughter, was curious to hear something of her history.

Ranee was scarcely thirty years of age, rather of a light brown complexion; she was not tall, but slight and finely shaped; her hair was black; her eyes dark and expressive; her features were soft and regular, and her face, though marked with some lines of care, was still beautiful. There was a kind of mystery in her look that was almost fascinating, and though a foreigner, she spoke English quite well, and was of a most amiable disposition. She was dressed partly in Oriental style, which was graceful and becoming; she wore large ear-rings; she had several rings on her fingers, and many gold ornaments

were conspicuous on different parts of her costume, all of which she wore at the time of the wreck. She had never been in England before; never before out of India. She spoke of Mr. Valiant as an old and valued friend, and both Miss Meade and her father were anxious to make her as comfortable as possible under the circumstances.

Early in the afternoon Mr. Valiant called at the parsonage, he brought his son with him, and was in a most happy mood. He came for the first time to spend a quiet evening with his friends at the curate's house, to talk of other days with Ranee; and perhaps to whisper well-deserved compliments to Esther, who had not been absent from his mind twenty minutes at a time since he handed her out of the life boat. Mr. Valiant's son was an intelligent boy, now nearly ten years of age, and his brown hair and clear skin might lead one to fancy that he was English born; he was attached to Ranee and was delighted when he met his father again. How calm it was this pleasant afternoon, the air was in repose as if weary by the fury which it exhibited only two days previously when the richly freighted Indiaman was cast upon the rocks. Though the great ship had been dashed to pieces, much of its freight had been washed ashore; planks and spars, and boxes, and bales, had been cast high and dry far up on the beach, and among other things two of Ranee's trunks had thus been discovered. Mr. Valiant gave them an account of what had taken place after they had landed from the life boat. "For more than three hours," said he, "we remained by the cable which had been attached to the vessel from the shore, until every human being except one was saved. The person unfortunately lost was an invalid missionary returning from Calcutta; when the vessel struck he became terribly alarmed, lost all presence of mind and was washed overboard, even a large Newfoundland dog was brought ashore by the Captain who was the last to leave the ship. Shortly afterwards the gale increased, and by dawn nothing of the wreck could be seen except part of a shattered mast—a melancholy signal of the disaster—

which must have been held in an upright position by an entanglement of ropes and blocks among the rocks. Thirty-two sailors and the Captain were saved, and eleven passengers. The next day after having secured most of what was washed ashore, the Captain, a number of seamen, and most of the passengers proceeded to London; seven native sailors from Calcutta, three from France, three from Germany, and two from Turkey, who were undetermined what to do, were persuaded by me to go to the Heath. I spoke to some in their native tongue, and have perhaps gained their confidence—I wanted a reinforcement of homeless men, and if I can induce them to remain, those who choose may build a temple and worship Buddha—or any other Deity—and abstain from beef every day in the year as rigidly as a good Catholic would on Friday, provided they do not interfere with the religious observances of others—a charge rarely sustained against pagans—and they try and co-operate with all for the general good. I wish to blend or amalgamate the Asiatic and the European, to wean them gradually from nationality and superstition, and with your aid” said he bowing to Mr. Meade, “to impart to them better and more exalted ideas, and much of the useful and most requisite knowledge of which they are I fear unfortunately ignorant.”

Miss Meade, who sat a little distance from the others, now turned to glance at the speaker, in whom she felt an increasing interest. She looked charming this mild afternoon; the sunlight was woven in her profusion of brown hair, so as to give it a golden sheen similar to a nimbus over the head of a Madonna. There was one present who particularly noticed this, and who was also struck with the beautiful expression of countenance which heightened the attractions of Esther, leaving her in his estimation almost incomparable. She had listened to every word with increasing pleasure, the voice which she had heard, was to her soft and musical, and for the time she forgot all care, and was supremely happy.

"The limited knowledge which I possess," replied the curate, "shall be most willingly bestowed in the way you mention, if I am obliged to leave my old quarters. It will be a pleasure to me to be engaged in such a duty; when one imparts useful information, he gains by the giving—I may not, however, succeed as a missionary, but —"

"No, not as a missionary," interrupted Mr. Valiant, "not as a missionary in the religious sense of the term; we will teach them no creeds. I would rather have them unlearn all they know of the intricacies of theology, than have their minds remain confused and stupified by the babel of clerical opinions on that subject. No, come as a teacher of common sense; you have that in abundance; come as the instructor of science; come and touch their hearts with the humane and generous feelings which I know you possess—that will be the true missionary work which will make them more contented with existence, than were they to be trained to believe that this beautiful world is but a vale of tears, and that the God they worshiped is one who can be easily incensed, and so revengeful and unforgiving as to hurl millions to perdition in order that His offended dignity may be satisfied. We want no such Deity—we shall have no such teaching there; and if we are to have any kind of religion, let it be that which will expand the heart and fully inculcate universal brotherly love."

A generous glow was upon the face of the speaker, when Miss Meade looked hastily at him. She was surprised and rather pained at the moment—were not the words she had just heard a reflection upon the attributes and character of the Great Being whom she had been trained to worship; and now, as her eyes rested calmly upon John Valiant, she was sorry, very sorry for his skeptical utterances. There was a time when she associated such ideas as Mr. Valiant had just given, as belonging to the dissolute; she could do so no longer; he was every way quite the reverse; and she felt grieved that he and others like him should be governed by such heterodox

opinions; and also grieved to find that the mind, the talent, and the learning of the age, went so far in a direction so oblique from what she considered truth.

Mr. Meade offered no reply to what had been said. As curate of Pendell, he was supposed to be orthodox; he had to give his assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of his Church, and probably would have assented to thirty-nine more at the time of his ordination were it indispensable. Like thousands of others, his trade was to be a priest, and as a priest, he must profess to believe whether he believed or not; and the tenets and mysteries which he could not understand, he left for the discussion of Doctors of Divinity, or to the wordy hair-splitting of semi-inspired commentators.

"And then," continued Mr. Valiant, "we must have another helper, we must have that great aid to devotion—music. What would your great cathedrals with their painting and statuary—with their images of saints, angels and apostles—be without it? How much more attractive are your forms and ceremonies; how almost inspired are your authorized prayers, and litanies, and vain repetitions; and how much more endurable are your prosy, vapid sermons, when relieved by that great allurements? Why, even the sternest sects that once preferred monotonous droning, and rejected instrumental music as indecorous, or as offensive to the deity, now try to rival one another with the costly melody of 'powerful organs' and well trained choirs; and the basso, the alto, the tenor, and the soprano, are at present the evangelists that do more now to keep piety alive in our sanctuaries than the holy archbishops themselves. The fact is that, at the present time, religion cannot stand alone, it must have such props to keep it from falling into utter puerility. Yes, we must have music as well as science on the the Heath, they are both the handmaids of humanity; and I have heard that the crowds which have flowed so constantly toward Pendell Church on the Sabbath, were drawn thither as much by the preacher at the organ, as by the preacher in the pulpit."

and having said this he bowed to Miss Meade as if alone worthy of this peculiar compliment.

Esther's face became suffused at the allusion, she dared not look toward him; even she, more orthodox than the curate himself felt the force of the remark and inwardly admitted its truth.

"It is the case, I really believe," said Mr. Meade, rather pleased that Mr. Valiant should have thus recognized his daughter's abilities, "and very often indeed, had it not been for the inspiration I received from Esther, my mind would have been in an unfit state for worship. After a long experience I find religion to be a thing more of feeling than of reason; and music being the soul of feeling prepares the heart. Many a time I have found it a heavy task to pray—I often have doubted the efficacy of any supplication to the deity—but after she had touched the organ, prayer was a pleasure, and I felt it a restraint to be limited to the formal words of our ritual. Yes, music is the voice of the heart, and it must be heard upon the Heath to insure success."

"Well, if we get a fine instrument for our institution on the Heath, you must find us a first class performer," said Mr. Valiant addressing the curate. "Oh, if you could only get us the one I heard a few nights since in the Old Church. It was nearly midnight, and were I superstitious I might believe, as some in this place still do, that the monks and nuns of other days leave their tombs at certain times, to celebrate again a midnight mass in their ancient cathedral, and that the '*Dies iræ*' is once more sung as if to awaken the slumbering dead. Oh, what music I chanced to hear—solemn and beautiful—I could almost fancy that I was listening to the very words of a verse or two from that impressive medieval hymn on the last judgment, mournfully chanted again, by some of the ancient, hooded, choristers of the old church:

*Tuba mirum spargens sonum
Per sepulera regionum
Coget omnes ante thronum.

Rex tremendæ majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva mea fons pietatis.'

The dirge-like sounds that were borne away on the gale at the time, would have unmanned the stoutest heart, one might readily imagine that he heard the tremulous voices of the prostrate monks as they tried to propitiate the terrible divinity they worshiped; or that holy angels were pleading with the furious storm that raged that night to spare some lone ship away upon the mighty deep, or to spare some, who were beloved in heaven, from being cast away upon a treacherous shore. Who could have been the magical performer in the church that night?"

Though this question was as it were naively asked by John Valiant, he no doubt could have made a shrewd guess as to the spirit, or the person that had called forth such harmony.

"Esther plays in the church at a late hour sometimes," said the curate, innocent of the knowledge that such an admission to Mr. Valiant would greatly disconcert her to whom he referred; she felt quite restless and would have gladly left the room had an opportunity offered. "At such times," continued the curate, "she and old Stephen have the church all to themselves, and seldom are any present unless the monks come back to hear her; in fact I have heard some say that her music can awake the dead, I doubt if this be the case, but one thing I do know, she often awakes the spiritually dead who come on Sundays to take a favorite doze in their pews."

Until that moment Miss Meade was not aware that John Valiant had ever been in the old church, much less that he had been present at so late an hour during her last performance on the organ. The knowledge of this, now discomposed her very much, why it should be so, she scarcely understood herself.

"Ah, I see, we know, I think, to whom we may now apply without a chance of refusal. You have great reason," said Mr. Valiant addressing the curate, "to be

proud of your fair daughter. From what I have already heard and seen she will be irresistible on the Heath as she is every where else. If she cannot awake the dead, I know that she can awake the living; she can infuse life into dead hearts, she has already given a fresh love of life to one which was partly withered; and you and she together will be the only kind of missionaries we shall ever require."

John Valiant, who must have noticed Esther's embarrassment, was desirous of making her feel more at ease. She had perhaps never before been subject to the peculiar emotions which had effected her during the last half hour. She could not have been else than highly pleased by the flattering allusion of Mr. Valiant, his peculiar recognition of her abilities started her heart to throb wildly in her bosom; yet, it was singular that his words should cause her, as it were, to shrink from such notice, she could hear praise from other lips with indifference but not from his. However, whether he fully understood her feelings at the time or otherwise, he gave a welcome turn to the conversation and reverted to Ranee, and to scenes of his earlier days in a distant land.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A RECOGNITION.

THE foreign lady, who was the object of much attention, sat quietly listening to the conversation between her old friend and the curate. She looked from time to time at John Valiant and then at Esther; with him she was well acquainted and she admired his nobleness of soul; she perhaps knew his worth better than any one present; and the way in which she occasionally scrutinized the features of Miss Meade might lead one to suppose that there was something in the countenance she scanned which greatly interested her; she looked at Esther like one who was trying to remember whether she had ever seen her face before—a face now crimsoned and beautiful in the evening light.

“I must tell you something of our friend,” said Mr. Valiant alluding to Ranee, “Miss Meade must have been greatly astonished to see us recognize each other as we did after having passed in darkness through such a terrible ordeal.”

“I certainly was astonished,” said Esther; “the surprise at meeting under such circumstances was evidently mutual.” And, were she to have added her sentiments at the moment, she would have told them that she was equally surprised and pleased when she recognized the features of him who had been so often in her thoughts since her late visit to Zingari.

“Well,” said Ranee, “it was a wonderful escape.

Alarmed as we well might be on board the ship, I was still more so when I first saw your little boat coming towards us; now poised upon a mighty wave, and now hidden in the depths out of which I thought you could never reappear; and then, when you approached us sufficiently near, so as we could recognize your forms, even the hardy sailors were amazed when they saw a woman at the helm. O noble creature," said she addressing Esther, "what a fearful risk you ran to save our lives!"

"I did not think it was any risk at the time," said Esther calmly, "I saw the imminent danger you were in; and I am sure that not one in the boat hesitated to go to your rescue out of consideration of personal safety—resolution can easily overcome fear."

"Yes, yours was a noble resolution," continued Ranee, "it may have been to your magnanimous conduct, and to your skilful guiding of that little boat through the flend-like waves eager for our destruction, that I am indebted for my life, and for my unexpected discovery of a valued friend. Yet, I cannot say that this was altogether unlooked for; all that day I anticipated some disaster, still I was not afraid; it was my impression, even after our vessel struck the rocks, that no great evil would befall me, that while others might be bereft of all, and scattered among strangers, I should be well cared for. I knew that our good friend Valiant was in England, but I fancied he would be found only in your great city of London; not here in this quiet village of Pendell. You cannot conceive the joy of my heart when I recognized his honest face. He knows a little of my history, he can tell you something about me in a few words; there may be little to interest any one, yet such as it is, I would prefer to have you acquainted with it." She spoke fluently in an animated way, but with a slightly foreign accent.

"It is now nearly twenty years," said Mr. Valiant, "since I first saw our friend Ranee, it was in Benares. This you know is the Holy City of the Hindoos, and regarded by many of them as the center of the world, the

gate of heaven, the place beyond all others in which the pious believer in Brahma wishes to die; thereby being certain of eternal happiness. Her father had just died there; he was related to one of the India princes who had formerly been a Rajah; and Ranee, then scarcely eight years old, was a widow. It had been arranged that in consequence of that misfortune she should be kept in Benares, educated and trained for religious duties, and after a certain time be placed to serve for life in one of the temples with other persons of like condition. You look surprised when I say that Ranee was a widow at such an early age; it was nevertheless the fact; she was a widow, although never married; I shall explain. A singular custom has long prevailed among the Hindoos in India of betrothing mere children, and should the bridegroom die before the celebration of the marriage, the child, or girl, or woman, is considered a widow, and as such is prohibited from being affianced again. Ranee was betrothed when she was only five years of age, she became a widow before she was seven, and her father, then in poor health, took her with him soon afterward, to the Holy City to receive instruction, and he remained there until he died. I had some business to transact with one of Ranee's relatives who was on a visit to Benares, I went there to meet him, and I saw her then for the first time. This singular custom of betrothal which originated among the ancient inhabitants of India, was subsequently adopted by the Jews, the Romans, and by other nations down to present times; indeed many of the Mosaic ceremonies have been copied solely from the original Hindoo, or Indian religious rites.

It was nearly ten years afterward before I saw Ranee again; I then scarcely recognized her, she had grown to be a beautiful woman, and I should not have known her unless I had been informed who she was. I had received a letter from a very particular friend in Calcutta, who informed me that he was about to get married, and he requested that I would be present at the ceremony. Be-

ing at the time but a short distance from Calcutta, I attended, and I was pleased and surprised to find that Ranee was to be the bride. While visiting one of the temples at Benares, my friend, whose name is Charles Maidston, happened to see her and was almost at once enamoured by her beauty. It was with the greatest difficulty that he found an opportunity of speaking to her, but they met, and in return she loved him with all her heart, and soon afterward—determined not to be baffled—he aided her and a female friend, an attendant in the temple, to escape with him to Calcutta. This female friend was subsequently the cause of much trouble. She was treacherous and deceitful, and tried to supplant Ranee in the affections of her lover. Thinking that she could more easily accomplish her purpose by becoming a Christian she went and got baptized and brought him the missionary's certificate, but all to no purpose. Charles Maidston looked upon all religions as superstition, and had as much reliance in the truth of ancient Paganism as he had in that of the modern faith of Christianity.

In spite of every effort of a jealous and unscrupulous woman, the marriage took place. I never saw two more happy persons in my life. By this act Ranee lost caste and was considered by many as degraded; while Maheel, her rival, thoroughly embittered, left the city, nursing her hatred for Ranee, and threatening, no doubt, to seek an opportunity for revenge; an opportunity for which she was willing to wait for years.

Some time afterward, when the terrible Sepoy rebellion was at its height, this same woman, Maheel, was an active agent among the disaffected. I heard of her in many places, and I know that she did her best to entrap Ranee and her husband to their destruction. When the rebellion was overcome, and when peace prevailed again, I settled in Bombay, and I was glad to find that in a few months after this, my friend and his wife had been induced to remove to that city. Charles Maidston was engaged in an extensive mercantile business, and had been very prosper-

ous. He was a most honorable person, but rather too confiding in the integrity of others. During a period of great commercial depression, he was prompted to become responsible to a large amount for two or three friends whom he wished to serve; a crisis came, they were unable to meet their payments, they left the country in a clandestine manner, and he was financially ruined. Whether he followed them or not, I am unable to say; my opinion is that he must have done so. I received a few hasty lines from him, stating that he would be under the necessity of leaving India for a time; he went away without troubling any of his friends, and as he was of an independent spirit, he did not give me the opportunity of making any effort to serve him. I subsequently learned that one of the persons for whom he had gone security to a large amount, had returned to England; another, an American, had left for the United States; it is quite probable that he followed one or the other of these, and I am inclined to think from some singular revelations which have been made lately to me, that he is in the country at the present time."

During this narrative, John Valliant must have again remembered what the Pariah had told him in India, after he had been snatched from the grasp of Thugs by his friend Maidston; and what Zingari had said to him on the Heath. He had already been instrumental in saving the wife of him who had rescued him in India—he had faced death to do so—there seemed to be a singular coincidence in all this, and he had a strong impression—even a belief—that Zingari's prediction would become true, and that Charles Maidston would yet be found in England.

Ranee, who had been listening attentively to what Mr. Valiant had related, now spoke, and stated that she was satisfied her husband was then in some part of Great Britain. Before he left home, he had been informed that one of the principal persons for whom he had gone security, had left India, and had been heard from as being in London; and he shortly afterward sailed from Bombay, determined, if possible, to find out this person; he thought

it would be his only chance of ever obtaining any compensation for the great loss he had sustained.

“Well,” continued Mr. Valiant, resuming his narrative, “shortly after my friend Maidston had left India, his wife and child—they had one son about eight years of age—went to reside with some of her friends at a place called Kundallah, the resort of many families from Bombay during hot weather. About this time, it was that I met with a severe loss—the greatest affliction of my life—my wife died; and, following this misfortune, there soon after came another. As I had many difficulties to contend with, I sent my son to Egutpoora to remain with some of his mother’s relatives, until I got quietly settled again. But such was not to be the case; the great domestic loss I had sustained, caused me to feel dejected, and then when the frightful news came that Edgar had been made away with by Thugs, I was almost totally cast down. Day after day I felt that I was losing strength; and my health became so impaired, that I was earnestly recommended to leave India and seek restoration in another climate. After some months’ delay, I decided on going to England. I took a particular interest in this country—not because it happened to be the land of my birth, but it was the scene of some of my earliest and most agreeable associations, and because, to my mind, it was the greatest central point from which liberty had started on its triumphal march throughout the world. But the greatest inducement was, that I might find my son; for, from what I had been informed, I had reason to believe that he had been taken to this country; besides, there was a probability that I might come across my friend Maidston. However, I must at present say no more about myself.

It seems that, from the day of Ranee’s marriage, almost to the hour that her husband left the country, Maheel never for a moment forgot her evil mission; she must have had eyes and ears in every direction to tell her of an opportunity for mischief. She was not sorry to hear that Maidston had been unfortunate in business; she was

rejoiced to learn that Raneë had been left behind—she strongly hoped that she had been deserted—and as she had somehow become possessed of abundant means to aid her in a wicked purpose, she decided to follow him to this country, in the expectation that she could, after all, win his affections, and prevail on him to forget the wife whom she thought he might be desirous of forsaking. What can surpass the intense hate of a neglected woman? Were Maheel a Christian, she would have shed Raneë's blood; but as Maheel was still a believer in Christna, she would seek the destruction of her rival by other means. She would steal Raneë's hated offspring, and send him to slavery, and break his mother's heart, or rob her of her reason. Maheel commenced at once to execute her design; she had her spies at hand, she had been informed that a boy, supposed to be Raneë's son, had been left at Egutpoora, and as Raneë had been there some time before that on a visit, she hastened to the place; she had had a description of the boy, and as Edgar must have had some resemblance to Hemar, she mistook my son for the other, and took him away. She must have soon discovered her error, but to make sure, she placed Edgar in the keeping of some of her confederates, and then she followed Raneë to Kundallah. She loitered around there several days before an opportunity served her; at last, by means of accomplices, she secured the boy, and kept him hidden for some months, not for the sake of any reward that might be offered, but for the purpose of seeing what effect it would have upon the health and spirits of her she wished to injure; she also had it circulated that Charles Maidston had gone to the United States, and that he had met with his death there in an encounter with the American that had despoiled him.

These reports, as well as the loss of her child, had a very severe effect upon the health of Raneë; a nervous fever was the result, from which she narrowly escaped, indeed it was asserted that one of her nurses—an emissary of Maheel's—had been detected while in the act of tam-

pering with the medicine; a deadly drug might have been administered were it not for the unusual precautions which had been taken when suspicion had been awakened. However, while she was still in a very weak condition, good news came at last, a letter was received which informed her that her husband was safe in England, that he was still in quest of one of the persons—the principal one—by whom he had been such a loser; that he had hopes of recovering much of what had been lost, and that as he did not intend to return to India, she and Hemar should sail as soon as possible for England; he even directed her to stop at a certain place in Betnall, the parish adjoining this, and that he would meet them there as soon as his business permitted.

A little before this time I sailed from Bombay, I had previously exhausted every effort to discover my son, and had offered an ample reward to whomsoever would restore him; yet I had been not long over a month out of the country before he was taken to Kundallah and delivered by a stranger to Ranee. She had heard of my loss, though I had not been informed of hers; unaccountable circumstances, or perhaps Maheel's ingenuity prevented this; however, she took good care of Edgar, he loves her almost as well as if she was his mother, and as she was unable to correspond with me, not knowing where I was, she brought him with her here, even to be wrecked in Pendall Bay; yet she is fully entitled to an ample reward, and the recompense which I trust I shall be able to give, will be to restore her son."

Ranee brightened up at this intelligence, and kissed the hand of him who had made her such a promise. "She knows all about it," continued Mr. Valiant, "I told her this morning on the lawn that Maheel had been on the Heath, and had left a boy there called Hemar, who I am satisfied is the son of my friend; he is in safe hands at present, and we shall all go there to-morrow and see for ourselves; and almost everything that I have just told you about our good friend Ranee, I have had from her

own lips since she had been here—but let me tell you all. When Maheel had made her escape with Hemar, she took him to Bombay and passed him off as her nephew, she went to a missionary and had him baptized, and, pretending to be a convert to Christianity she was re-baptized herself. She told the missionary a singular story concerning persecutions which she said she had suffered on account of her change of faith, and, as the missionary was on the point of returning to Europe, he was, like others of his class, no doubt desirous of exhibiting such spiritual trophies in England, and was therefore only too ready to accede to her proposal to be taken to this country. Upon their arrival, however, he was greatly aggravated; Maheel and the boy had suddenly disappeared, and he has not seen them since.

One of Maheel's accomplices in this vile business was subsequently induced to reveal all she knew of the matter to Ranee, and I am satisfied that much of the information thus obtained will turn out to be correct. Maheel is still I believe in this country; she is still bent on evil, she must be watched. I have those of her race on the Heath that will look closely after her. If she now finds out Ranee is in England she will work and plot to effect a malicious purpose, and in her desperation may commit some more atrocious act than that of which she has already been guilty."

"I am not afraid of the woman," said Ranee, "if I have got clear of her so long, I now feel more confident, surrounded as I am by true friends. I have already encountered many difficulties, and as you too well know, have but just escaped a terrible danger to get even to this place. I have no fear of her; my poor boy though long in her power has been singularly protected, he is now you say, safe out of her grasp. I shall see my child again, my own dear little Hemar. Oh, what happiness to find him again! I have had months of torture thinking of him—sad, sad days, and dreary, restless nights—and to meet with my poor boy once more, after all this intense mental anguish

will be a sufficient recompense for what I have suffered.’

“You shall have that great pleasure to-morrow,” said Mr. Valiant, “be patient until then. I would not have told you of this until I had made sufficient inquiries, and was confident you should not be disappointed. The boy now on the Heath with good old Zingari is yours. I might have told you this when we landed from the wreck, even at the moment you restored my son Edgar, but I waited to be better assured; now I am positive, and it may not be long before you also meet with his father.”

“Yes, yes, you shall all meet again, you shall,” said the curate whose sympathies caused him to venture this assertion, and tears almost blinded his eyes as he uttered the words.

Esther stooped over Raneë in an affectionate manner and said something as if to confirm what her father had so impulsively promised. The murmur of her voice ought to have had a wonderfully soothing effect, it was always like lulling melody, but now it seems to startle one person present. Why was it that Raneë stood up so suddenly? She stepped back and gazed at Esther whose features wore a beautiful glow, while the red light of the fading day filled the whole apartment. “The very tone of his voice,” said Raneë appealing to John Valiant, “and look; his very smile! I noticed this when I first saw her. How wonderful! See, is there not a most striking resemblance?” She then pulled out a portrait from her bosom—the portrait of her husband—and exhibited it before them all. Esther glanced at it and uttered an exclamation of surprise; the curate looked at it closely for a moment or two, and then turning to Raneë he seized her hands in delight and cried out: “Good God! it is the face, the very face of my son Charles!”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A SAD END.

WHILE Mr. Meade and his friend still remained in earnest conversation in the little parlor of the parsonage, it became night; not a night of black darkness, but one sufficiently gloomy and windy to cause those who were obliged to travel to wish that they were near their journey's end. Heavy gusts swept across the Bay, and rushed moaning through the scattered trees, and thence onward, occasionally in vast circles as if chasing one another, along the sterile plain until they passed the most distant and elevated headland that gave a full view of the ocean. It was a bleak night for a traveler, or for any homeless creature that had no welcome to a friendly shelter; and such a creature—a forlorn looking woman—was out this time on a highway close to the coast, and fully ten miles from Pendell; and her face was turned toward the parish of Betnall. She limped now and then as if getting footsore or very weary, yet still she toiled along laboriously upon the lonely highway—lonely and alone—no, not alone; she carried a bundle in her arms—an infant—and when she came to a rivulet that crossed the road in a kind of ravine, she laid her bundle down close to a tree, and went and scooped up some water in her hand, and drank by this means until she was satisfied. She looked around leisurely; she seemed to know the place, and stood listening attentively as if for footsteps; but no such sounds came, she only heard the wind, and at intervals

when that spent itself, she could hear the gurgling of the little stream.

The child was very quiet and while it slept so peacefully, its mother—for this woman was the mother—went toward an old ruin which stood at a short distance. This dilapidated structure—the scene of many a bloody struggle—was roofless; it had a great gaping arched doorway in front, as forbidding in the night as the wide entrance to a sepulchral vault; and the ivy and wild vines that clung to the walls in dense profusion, completely hid the spaces originally left for windows.

The woman was not afraid to stand in the gloomy entrance and to look in at the darkness; she had probably been there before. She went in and groped in one of the corners with her hand, but she discovered nothing in the pile of stones that lay inside; if she expected to find anything there, or to see or hear anybody in or near the place she was disappointed; and she felt so. She went back and lifted her bundle and placed it in a sheltered spot near the doorway; she sat close by, stooped over, with her head leaning on her hands, in deep thought, perhaps brooding over her condition; her dark hair hung negligently upon her shoulders, an old shawl was carelessly thrown around her, and her dress was patched and torn in several places. She was young—far yet from thirty; she was weak and had evidently suffered from sickness or destitution. Why does she sit here? Is that vault-like recess behind her the only place of shelter she can find? and is that stream her only source of refreshment? She now lifts her bundle—the child is still quiet—she opens it a little, she feels lonely and almost alone, and wishes to hear the least sound of anything that has life, even the breathing of the child; but now she cannot hear this. Is it because of the moaning of the wind? She stoops closer. Ha! She hurriedly opens the bundle—the infant moves not; the woman gives a sharp cry, she is now indeed alone, for the child is dead. She still waits—stooped closer yet, waiting or wishing for life to return—it comes

not—she starts up and with a wild stare looks around once more—a pitiful pleading look—and again she lifts the infant as if to be fully assured. “Dead, dead—better dead than alive,” muttered the woman solemnly, “better dead with so little suffering, than to live and suffer much. But *he* shall suffer more than thou hast. I don’t want to wake thee, child, stay dead as thou art. Death will be more of life to thee than life ever was. Thou wert neglected by all but me. Yet alas! I could not give thee proper nourishment. Thou hast sucked in my sorrow, and it poisoned thee; would that the same could free me to follow. Aye, stay dead; he that should have owned thee would have abandoned thee—thou wert with me abandoned. Stay dead poor little creature—would that I were away with thee! Poor thing, thou never didst any harm—and yet death came—’twas thy best friend. Thou wert not long here to learn evil—*he* would have taught thee evil. Thou art now in heaven where he shall never go—never! Thou mightst have lived to learn evil ways from him as others have learned them; but he cannot harm thee now. He would wish thee dead; yet he may not know that thou art gone until he sees thee as a star in glory from the black regions of the condemned.” She pressed her hands to the sides of her head as if to keep down some more agitating thought. “Yes, better dead than to be disowned; better that I were as thou art than to be degraded for having become a mother by such a man as the heartless rector of Betnall. A mother who has had no husband is nothing but an abandoned wretch, scarcely fit to live; so the pious of the rector’s congregation say. O Christian charity! But is he fit to live if I am not; he the treacherous seducer. Yes, they will bid him live, they will hear him pray and preach—they will overlook his sin—but I, poor abandoned creature, cannot be forgiven. Ah! John Rockett, thou shalt die some time—perhaps thy end may be near—if so, God have mercy on thee, thou hast much to answer for; keep thy prayers for thyself thou wilt need them all. Thou hast brought many a poor creature to shame and

distress; if I can prevent it thou shalt do so no longer; I have kept thy secret only too faithfully, yet thou wouldst let me starve. I have withheld my hand, but now I shall strike, I shall expose thee before the world, in thy very church if I can steal in—so Parson Rockett prepare.”

She was now much excited, she pressed her hands again to the sides of her head, and stooped down to look at the features of her dead child. She remained in this position for several minutes, and though her eyes seemed fixed upon the placid features of the infant, her thoughts were away with the past.

She remembered that it was but little over two years since she had left the fireside of her parents, the quiet, humble home of her honest father to go into the service of the Rev. John Rockett, rector of Betnall. How partial the rector had always been to her. He had seen her at church and had noticed her tidiness and good looks, and would have her for a servant. How satisfied her mother was to let her go, it was lucky to get such a fine place; she would learn her catechism better, and she of course would have to attend church more regularly, and learn lessons of strict morality in a minister's dwelling; this was what her indulgent mother had imagined. But how different had been her experience in the apostolic mansion; rioting and drunkenness, a disorderly household, debauchery and a neglected and abused wife. Then came the fiend to whisper avowals and promises that he never fulfilled, and then followed her seduction, and heartless abandonment.*

* The following is an extract from the *New York World*, Nov. 1873 See Note 16 for further particulars of clerical frailty.

A sad clerical scandal was attracting attention in London. The Rev. John Reed was being tried before Sir R. Phillimore, in the Court of Arches, upon a criminal charge at the instance of the Bishop of Exeter, for soliciting the chastity of four young women who had been employed as domestics in his family. The accused is the Vicar of Tregony, in Cornwall. He was fifty-eight years old; he had been charged with simony, in buying the living in 1865, and he did not enter upon it until 1868. He wife was an invalid, and occupied a separate bedroom. The evidence was quite unfit for publication; but, nevertheless, some of the London papers were printing it at length.

So far she had wandered back into the dreary past. What was to be her future among Christian people who upheld social laws so shamefully partial, unjust and oppressive? She dared not look upon the bleak, hopeless aspect of the time to come. She had scarcely a hope left; she would only be a poor despised thing, shunned and maligned even by the ostentatiously devout of her own sex whose sin was better concealed. And she would be pointed at by church going matrons as a living text for a domestic lecture on natural depravity.

These reflections brought her almost to the brink of despair. What had she now to live for? She would fain embrace death; but still she would not die, she must live yet longer, she had a duty to perform, a disclosure to make, a frail revenge to accomplish, and then she cared not for existence. Impressed with these ideas she started up, her look was determined, she bared her right arm and gazed at it thoughtfully. "Thin and wan, skin and bone, to what it used to be, but still strong enough for the work I have to do when I have settled with him. O! God, that I should ever think of taking my own life; that my friends, if I have one left—should have to drag for my body in a pond, or search for it at the bottom of a cliff, or wait until the tide throws it up among seaweeds on the beach. O God! what an end to all my expectations."

Having muttered this she bound her dishevelled hair, folded the old shawl around her, and before she lifted the bundle she went once more into the vault-like place and soon returned.

"Not a shilling there, nothing left to screen us from the cold blast, not a mouthful of bread for us to eat—for us? alas! not for us—for me alone." She had for the moment forgotten that the child was dead. "He promised to send something here, but he has failed to do so as he did before; the crumbs of his table would be of some help now, but the brute forgets us—I shall not forget him, I shall see his wife to-morrow, and I shall expose him on Sunday in the presence of his congregation—I will." She

hurriedly lifted up the bundle; her resolution gave her fresh strength, she had again forgotten that the child was dead; but soon the terrible truth came, and when she felt its now stiffened limbs she staggered under the trifling burden and had to lean against a tree.

"I shall take thee to him at once—this very night if I can—and then, O, God! must I take thee to thy grave alone."

"No, not alone," said a voice close to her side, "not alone, you shall have one to follow. Let me go with you, I want to see a grave, I want to see where the dead lie, and how they rest, so that I shall feel better able if need be to add another to their number."

The woman was startled; she fancied that some poor, crazed creature had made her escape from the prison workhouse not far distant. The one who had so suddenly addressed her was a dark haired, dark featured woman, whose wild expression caused her black eyes to almost flash in the gloom. She was wrapt in a large cloak, and was greatly excited.

"Let me go with you, I shall help you. I may—I shall want your help in return. You want revenge, so do I. I heard what you said, let me help you. I have money and can pay you. You know this place. I want you to be my guide. I want you to tell me of some I seek. Are they here, tell me? Don't look so afraid, I am now a Thug, but I won't hurt you. See, here is gold."

She held out a gold piece in her hand, but the other woman hesitated to touch it.

"Take it, you want it more than I do; there is plenty more in this," said she, exhibiting a purse, "I may not want it long."

"Let me carry your bundle." She went toward the woman, but when she saw the face of the dead child in the murky light, she drew quickly back. "Ha! I would rather not touch the dead—our Sudras do that. You are a Christian, and care not. Yet, I would touch it, if I could but restore the life it has lost. Why weep for your child?

You are a Christian, and you have the promise recorded in your great book, that the prayer of faith can reanimate. Have you faith in that promise? If I were a Christian, and had faith, I would raise that dead child. Cannot you do so? Have you ever seen the dead raised through faith—has anybody? You will not reply. Alas! like others, you doubt, and like others, you believe. Prove that one, even one, has ever been restored by faith, and I too shall be a Christian. Prove it, and by that same faith I shall confound my enemies; I shall use that power with as little mercy as Peter used it when he struck down Ananias and Sapphira. Wonderful promise, wonderful faith, wonderful failures; and it still remains for you and others the same wonderful delusion. Woman, weep on, but your dead cannot revive! Come let us lay it in its grave; let us be the sole mourners. Seldom has pity found a place in my heart, but I can pity you, though many Christians will not. You are no sinner in my eyes—you have been sinned against. You are not a polluted thing, and if I, with an iron heart, can compassionate you, be assured that the great Creator will be far more willing to do the same. You are a mother—a mother—there is something holy in that name, it is the magic word to bring out the tenderest gush of nature; and the fountain of true affection can never completely burst out and overflow until touched by the maternal hand. O, if I had only been a mother, I might have had a heart, and I might have been different now! You still weep—poor thing! If I stay near you much longer, tears may come to my eyes once more, and I may lose my power to hate, and become human again. Yet I cannot leave you. I am a fiend—I have little save hatred for any but you. Come, come, let us away with your dead, and then we shall deal with the living.”

The woman still leaned against the tree; she was sobbing now, and her companion gently placed a hand upon her shoulder and led her from the spot.

“What is your name? You won’t speak? I shall tell you mine; I am Maheel—the wicked Maheel—I am wick-

ed. I have been despised by the only one I ever loved, and now I have left Christna the benevolent to become, perhaps, a worshiper of Siva forever. Even worse than that I shall become a Christian Thug, and be as heartless as a Puritan, and as cruel as an Inquisitor. He who has rejected me shall soon know this; and my rival, if still alive, she whom I hate, must die. Come, let us leave this—do not stare at me as if I were Kali herself, I will never hurt you. Come with me to Betnall, and Maheel will be your friend.”

In a few minutes they got to the top of a hill. Maheel led her companion thus far without any resistance, indeed it was the direction in which the woman wished to travel. Below them at the distance of about half a mile the spire of the parish church of Betnall could be dimly seen against the clouded sky, and lights were yet to be seen in many of the houses, one of which in particular seemed to attract the notice of Maheel’s companion.

“Is that Betnall?” asked Maheel.

“Yes,” replied the woman, “that is Betnall.”

“Do you know many there?”

After a pause Maheel was answered: “Yes, one too many.”

“Where does your mother live?”

The poor woman looked down with the aspect of despair and slowly muttered: “In heaven.”

“Ha!” exclaimed Maheel, “his prayers and good works, his vile treatment of you did that also. Where is the tavern?”

“Away to the right of the church,” said the woman, indicating the direction, not by pointing with the finger, but with a significant nod of her head.

“Shall we go to the cemetery first?” asked Maheel, “we can find one to bury this child for you, I will pay for the labor.”

“No,” replied the woman with some energy, “I shall take it to *him*, he shall read the service over it first and bury it afterward. He has the best right to do this, and I

want his whole congregation to be at the funeral, and his wife among the mourners."

"Shall I go with you," asked Maheel.

"No, I wish to go alone."

"Maheel was silent for a minute and then said: "Well go alone. I shall meet you again. But tell me," said she after some hesitation, "do you know any one here by the name of Maidston?"

"No, I never heard the name before."

"Well, I shall find out for myself, but mind, I must see you again, you may be able to serve me, and I can help you. I shall perhaps be back in an hour or two. Meet me at the tavern if you can by that time—I shall find it over the way you say," said Maheel pointing toward where she supposed it was.

"Yes," replied the woman, "go in that direction and you will see the sign post."

Maheel then muffled herself closely up and partly covered her face in the folds of the large cloak, she seemed anxious to remain unknown to all others, and before she went away she thrust a gold piece into the woman's hand and left her, and just then the clock in the church tower struck eleven.

Over half an hour from this time when the night grew darker and the wind much higher, the Rev. John Rockett, rector of Betnall, the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, chaplain to the bishop of Storkchester, another clerical friend, and two of the neighboring gentry, each of whom to euphemize might be simply called a *bon vivant* in his own way, were comfortably seated around a table in the large dining room of the rectory. The Rev. Mr. Vanscourt while on his way to take possession of his new living at Pendell, or to be installed as rector of that parish, had stopped to spend a day or two with his friend Rockett. Perhaps he called to get a little spiritual advice from a pastor of so much experience in holy things; or, as the Rev. Mr. Rockett was known to be a sound churchman, and a great champion for biblical authority, it might be that the newly

appointed rector wished to converse with his more orthodox brother in order to get rid of a score or two of damning doubts on the subject of scriptural inspiration, and scriptural contradictions, lest the faith of the simple and unsuspecting believers at Pendell might be contaminated by false teaching, or by the theories or explanations of modern science. So far the rector and his friends had had a jolly time of it. In the fore part of the day there was a cock fight in the back yard, and within an hour and a half parson Rockett's best game bird, for which he had paid a large sum, had disabled two of his antagonists, and killed two others. During dinner the conversation had been lively, and though nothing had been said about the condition of the heathen world, or the progress of religion, the parson had a more absorbing subject, he was fierce in his denunciations of the attempts to disestablish the Church in Ireland, inferring that as soon as the emissaries of Satan had accomplished their purpose in the Sister Isle a repetition of the infamous measure would be introduced in England. He had no particular complaint to make respecting any fresh predatory incursions from the Heath, but he spoke in disparagement of the democratic notions of John Valiant, the wealthy proprietor of the Mayston estate, and alluded to him as being a kind of pagan or infidel who could show the barbarians around him the shortest cut to hell; who cared nothing for religion, and who never heard a prayer uttered from June to January. "I don't suppose they care much for prayer on the Heath," said Mr. Vanscourt, "like Mr. Tyndall and other such daring fellows, they believe they can get along well enough without it. In fact you know, Rockett, that many of ourselves begin to doubt whether prayer is of any benefit, and some of the bishops begin to grumble at our remissness in this respect; * however during the late har-

* In a letter dated December 24th, 1872, addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Archdeacon of Canterbury and Maidstone, the Primate expresses surprise that the clergy generally have not made use of the prayers subscribed in the Liturgy of the Church of England for seasons of excessive rain. His Grace trusts that, if we have

vest we were urged in behalf of many of our agricultural friends, to offer prayers in the Cathedral for fine weather even the bishop himself said 'amen' among the rest; but no fine days came except an odd Sunday, and then of course none dare work; instead of that, we had rain, rain, rain nearly every day for a month. Speaking of the Heath, how is your good old friend, the gypsy woman—old Zingari—of course you can't forget her."

"O, the Jezebel," said Mr. Rockett, in a rather excited manner, "I know that old wretch too well. She's a fit harpy for John Valiant and his vile gang; she's an impostor, an infernal old witch that ought to be sent post-haste to—"

"That's it, Jack!" interrupted the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, who perceived that the copious draughts of brandy and water which the rector had swallowed, had already produced something more than a stimulating effect, and he wished to banter him a little for the sake of amusement. "That's it Jack, hurry her off in true scriptural style; you know the sentence pronounced against such reptiles—it is in fact a Divine command—'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live, these are the very words, so be off and make away with her. Ah, but now that I remember,'" continued he in subdued voice, "she is not the kind of witch that you prefer to deal with. If report be true you are a good judge of the sort of witches that used to fascinate our

a continuance of the unusually wet weather which has prevailed of late, and which has put a stop to agricultural operations in many parts of the country, the clergy in the Archdeaconry will not fail to make use of the prayer wherever the circumstances of the district appear to call for it.

During the late cattle plague in England, the Bishop of Lincoln ordered the following prayer to be used in the churches of his diocese. Unfortunately for the owners of the cattle the prayer proved of very little service.

"Almighty God, who has made all things on earth for man, and dost save both man and beast, we thank thee for the blessings we receive from thee in the creatures of thy hand, and we pray thee to restore to health those among them which are diseased, and to stay this plague and sickness of our cattle, so that we may use thy gifts with joyful hearts to our comfort and thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen." *London paper*, 1872.

illustrious friend Solomon in the olden time—that was the age you ought to have lived in, Jack. The purists are down on you now because it is hinted that you deal with only five or six—that of course is only a Methodist slander—but slander or not, quote Scripture for them, man, if they trouble you again; you have as good right to a plurality of wives, or hand-maids, or concubines, as Jacob, or David, or Solomon, or many others. God permitted these holy patriarchs and kings to indulge to this extent; and, as he is unchangeable, his ministering servants in these latter days may justly claim the same privilege—we are all I imagine too foolishly scrupulous in this respect. You remember King Solomon had a thousand; a thousand all told.”

“A thousand?—no, not quite a thousand,” muttered the Rev. Mr. Rockett with a stupid smile, while his unsteady head hung down, now and then swaying from side to side.

“Yes, Jack, a full thousand; nothing in ancient or modern times can come up to that—here is chapter and verse for it: ‘And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines.’ ’Twas a proof of his wisdom to be able to keep them from tearing one another’s eyes out.”

“So it was, so it was,” said Parson Rockett, tossing up his head and making a silly attempt to brighten up a little. “So it was, Vanscourt; for he was a jolly good fel—now Vanscourt drink your glass and don’t bother us with any more of such moral quotations—hic.”

“Moral quotations? Ha, ha, everything Scriptural is moral of course,” replied Mr. Vanscourt, “though I must admit that there are many chapters in the Old Testament that I should prefer not to read in the presence of a refined congregation. I won’t give you the exact chapters lest you might study them for your own edification; no doubt you have read them over and over, and have them all by heart.”

“Vanscourt—hic—don’t preach at us all night; you’d

make a queer kind of Joseph yourself if temptation came. I know a witch—hic—that you'd like to make away with."

"O, indeed I suppose you do. You have also some knowledge of the renowned witch of Endor. Now Jack, upon your honor, can you read the story of that wonderful resurrectionist without smiling at the gullability of your hearers?"

"Of course I can, so can you," replied Mr. Rockett stupidly, "the witch of Endor called, and up Samuel came. A pretty witch has power even to raise the dead."

Just then the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt who sat sideways near one of the windows chanced to turn his head toward it, the curtain had been partly drawn, and there right before him, was a woman's face, close up, almost touching the glass. A face once pretty, but now looking pinched and pale by want or disease. The night must have been very dark, for the light shone full upon her, revealing every feature; and her sunken eyes were fixed sternly upon the flushed and bloated countenance of the rector of Betnall.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Vanscourt, "if there is not the veritable witch of Endor herself."

He was rather startled by the apparition; there was something ghost-like in the solemn, cadaverous face at the window-pane, and in the wild stare which was settled upon the now inebriated host.

"See there, Rockett, look at that woman, she seems to want you."

The parson looked up at his friend Vanscourt with the same stupid smile and gave an incredulous wink, but then to be satisfied he made an effort and turned to the window and saw the pale woman. He closed his eyes for a moment, he rubbed them as if to be certain that he was not in a dream—there she was still. The smile had already faded from his face and he tried to avoid the eyes that seemed to enter his very soul. He now grew nervous; then he became irritable, and all at once he seemed to be aware of who it was, and to have become influenced by a

determination to go out and meet the intruder directly.

"I want a light—bring me a lantern." He shouted this, and in quick time a servant brought what he wanted. He took the lantern, and, without a word of apology, left the room and the door was scarcely closed behind him ere the woman's face disappeared from the window.

When he got outside, the chill air caused him to shiver, and he stumbled in the darkness. He walked a little distance from the house, along the pathway leading to the stable, and looked about, but he could see no one. He held the lantern up almost as high as his head, but the stream of light did not enable him to discover the form of a human being, he could only see the row of tall poplar trees, that stood in the road along the line of the garden wall, swaying in the wind. He hesitated:

"Was it her ghost?" muttered he to himself. "I heard yesterday that the wench was dead—was it her I saw?"

"Yes it was her you saw—you hoped she was dead—you would let her starve and die like a pauper—see, here is a dead pauper—and now I will never leave you until I have revenge for this, and until I expose you all over the parish."

The woman stood before him and held out the dead child, she seemed thoroughly aroused and indifferent to what she said or did.

The rector, though a little startled at first, now gave the woman an indignant scowl. "I wish you were dead, you infamous harlot, why did you dare to come here with your dead brat?—did I not caution you before? I shall now have you locked up and confined forever as a dangerous lunatic."

"A harlot!—this word from you?" O heartless monster, shameless liar, degraded as I feel for having yielded to you, I am not yet as low as you would have me—not as degraded in the sight of heaven as you are yourself—see," said she holding out the dead infant, "you are a murderer. You promised us a home and support, but you let us starve. A harlot! O, God, what a monster!"

The woman had raised her voice, and were it not for the voice of the wind as it rushed through the trees, she would have been heard in the house.

"See," cried the now infuriate rector, "if you shout that way I shall dash your damned brains out—I will, by heavens!" He clutched her by the shoulder and shoved her from him with such violence, that the poor weak woman was unable to hold the infant, and she let it fall to the ground.

"Oh, my child," she cried, and she ran to lift it, "I shall take it to your abused wife and she, yes she, shall know all."

"Never, you she-devil, you shall never touch that bastard again if that's what you're at." He seized her again, pushed her aside and made a kick at the bundle to send it beyond her reach; he then dragged her after him toward a large out building which was a short distance from the stable. When he reached this place he tried to burst open the door, but he found that the key had been left in it, and he forced the woman in before him. The poor famished creature was unable to make the least resistance, her strength had been completely spent, and quick as he let her go, she fell heavily on the rough floor in a swoon.

The rector who was greatly flurried locked the door at once on the inside and flung the key away. He scarcely knew what he was doing; he was still under the influence of strong liquor, but he was determined that she should not escape and get into the house.

The outbuilding in which they were was very large; the upper part was packed with a large quantity of hay and straw, which could not conveniently be put into the stable; the lower part contained a pile of dried wood, several old packing cases, some broken furniture, a carpenter's bench, some boards, and a lot of odds and ends which were here thrown aside.

The rector now stooped low, he held the lantern close to the woman's face, she was breathing, faintly breathing, but very pale. She must have been cut when she fell, for

there was a large gash across her temple, and she was bleeding profusely. He began to get afraid—perhaps the woman was going to die—he did not care much for that, but how could he get rid of the dead; there was the body of the child lying outside. He must hurry back to the house for a servant, he tried to open the door, he groped around but could not find the key—he became confused; he was scarcely able to consider what was the best to do. He went to a corner and got up the ladder which led to the loft, he would try and make his way through the dry hay and straw and drop down outside from the large opening at the end. In his condition such an effort was difficult and dangerous, but on he went; he took a few steps and stumbled, and the lantern flew out of his hand into the very midst of the combustible stuff about him.

The rector's friends remained still seated at the table, and fresh decoctions had been prepared. Mr. Rockett had been gone nearly an hour, and during that time Mr. Vanscourt, following up the topic which had been under discussion, entertained his companions with little scriptural stories concerning Lot and his daughters; Rachel and Bilhah; Reuben and Bilhah; Leah and Rachel; Judah, Onan and Tamar; Joseph and Potipher's wife; David and Bathsheba; Amnon and Tamar; and other pious exemplary recitals of a similar kind from the "Word of God"; and then he followed with inuendoes touching certain reputed propensities of their absent host. The time so far had been spent agreeably, they were all in—and with—the best of spirits, but soon after this they began to wonder why the rector had remained out so long.

Mr. Vanscourt went to the window. "Can it be," said he, "that we have the full moon? I scarcely thought it was the proper time for that. See, it is almost as bright as day, and there is that woman—our witch of Endor—away down there; I thought she had gone away to comfort Saul."

There was a woman outside near the end of the garden, she was closely muffled up, and was looking off in a direc-

tion from the house. The light now grew red, and the room was all aglow. Why is this? It cannot be sunrise, for it is not yet far from midnight. A wild scream was now heard. Mr. Vanscourt quickly turned his head toward the illuminated point: "Good God!" exclaimed he, "the large outhouse is all on fire! Where is Mr. Rockett?" They all ran out, every one in the house followed. A search was made in all directions for the rector, but he was not to be found; neither could the woman now be seen.

The rector's wife had been very poorly for some days and could not leave her room; she was terribly alarmed. She watched the lurid light, little dreaming of what the flames were then devouring. She heard a footstep in her room, and was startled by the appearance of a woman, closely wrapped in a large cloak. The unknown visitor was flurried and almost breathless, she laid a bundle on the marble topped bedroom table. "I have brought you your husband's infant," said she, "its mother and he are out there in that Christian Sutte, and their bones will be reduced to ashes before dawn. You may have heard that Zingari once told him that he would never need a grave, he never will; but in his place you must try and find one to-morrow for that dead child."

The words were scarcely uttered before the rector's wife fell fainting into an arm chair; and Maheel having done this fancied service for an unfortunate sister, stole out of the house undiscovered, and like Ate she went her way alone to try and work evil, and bring misery to others.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

STILL ANOTHER.

IT was not yet dawn—it was chilly—it was misty—it was gloomy; but thick mist occasionally reflected the crimson light that was emitted by the expiring flames of the still burning outhouse; and the same dense vapor seemed at times to rest like a flushed and angry cloud upon the dark brow of the hill that over-looked the village of Betnall. At such moments of partial illumination objects could be plainly seen which in the the intermitting periods would not be visible, and now, at the unusual hour, the form of a woman might be discovered standing on the hill, and from her attitude and moody expression of countenance, it would require no great effort to fancy that she was the spirit of the same angry cloud gloating upon the ruin and destruction which was taking place beneath her.

But, strange to say, though one might imagine that she was gazing at the disastrous fire with satisfaction, she was watching it with a different feeling. She who but lately had awakened human sympathy in her breast, had miserably perished in the flames before her, and for the sake of the poor, wretched, forlorn creature who had stood with her but a few hours previously, near the spot on which she was now standing, she would if possible have prevented the dreadful occurrence that had taken place, even if it should have added a few more years to the useless, wicked life of the reverend wretch who had betrayed the

unfortunate woman for whom she felt so much sympathy. But the heart of Maheel was closed again; she had no hope after this of ever meeting a single mortal whose misfortunes she could compassionate; she had scarcely a hope of ever finding one who would take an interest in her own fate. A feeble beam of sunlight had just commenced to thaw the icicle in which her heart was encased, when a black cloud intervened leaving it more cold, more indurated, and more desolate than ever. Within a few hours she had been doubly discomfited; she had lately thought she had found one whom she might be able to assist, and from whom she might get assistance in return; and she expected to have been able to meet another for whom she had long sought, in whom she had long taken the dearest interest that a woman can take, but whose life she was at present willing to embitter rather than be again shunned and despised for the sake of a hated rival. She had faint hopes however that that rival was not in existence, or if alive she believed she was still in India; yet, though almost driven to desperation, she was ready to make one more appeal to him she sought, and if all failed, if he scorned her again, she would summon every evil power in her nature to make him unhappy. Even as it was, while the image of that successful rival was in her mind, she could not rest, and she was prepared to do the most daring act, even at the cost of her life to have revenge. If she failed in this, her last effort to win the regard of him on whom her strong affections had so long been wasted, she would abandon all hope, become reckless as to pity or remorse, and pursue Ranee to the ends of the earth; and then she would exult to see him who had slighted her, a prey to despair.

She had been on the hill for some time looking gloomily at the ascending flames, she seemed unable to leave the spot, her eyes were fixed on the fire as if it were consuming her last prop of earthly happiness, or her last hope of heavenly bliss, and as if desirous of remaining until she saw the last ember expire. There were

moments when she was tempted to rush down into the midst of the glowing mass—it was only the demon of revenge that kept her from self-destruction. She could not endure the idea of having others whom she hated live and enjoy the life which had nearly lost every attraction for her; and there she stood, now in the deep gloom and now in the dim light, thinking and brooding, and plotting, how she could best effect the purpose which was likely to be the principal object of her future existence.

After she had parted with the unhappy woman whom she happened to meet the previous night, she went to the little inn at Betnall and made inquiries for the person she wished to hear of. The landlord, who was about retiring for the night, was surprised to see a stranger, muffled up as she was, at so late an hour. He tried to get a glance at her face but could not make out a single feature. Maheel was completely unknown to him; he could give her no information; the name of the person for whom she asked was one he had never heard of before. He pressed her to stay in his house for the night; he told her there was no other place for the accommodation of strangers within three miles of Betnall. Stay she would not, she made some trifling excuse; she was, she said, partly acquainted with some in the neighborhood, she could remain with a friend, and when she took her departure the landlord was half inclined to follow, for being rather shrewd and inquisitive he doubted what she had said, and from her singular manner and appearance, he took it into his head to fancy that she was somehow bent upon evil.

Late as it was she called at two or three other places, but with the like result. Could she have been purposely misinformed? She had had information from an accomplice in India—from one that she had well paid—that Charles Maidston had left India for England and that he intended to go to the village of Betnall, probably the place of his birth, to see his friends, or relatives if any were living. She was now in Betnall—a poor looking resort, for a once wealthy India merchant—scarcely more

than a dozen houses besides the little inn and the large parsonage. Was there any other place of the same name in the south of England? No, this was Betnall in the parish of Betnall, and if he could not be found here, something must have happened to prevent his coming, or else he was there under an assumed name.

Had it come to the knowledge of any person that she had sinister designs, or that she wished evil to any human being? Had any one warned Charles Maidston to keep out of her way? So far she had in a manner kept her mind to herself and did not make known her purposes. The poor woman with whom she was lately in company might perhaps, from her excited words and inquiries, suspect something, but that injured creature had troubles of her own which were too absorbing to permit her to think of any thing else. There was one individual, however, that Maheel believed knew, or rather guessed at her intentions. During her stay upon the Heath she had made a kind of confidant of old Zingari, and had asked certain questions of her and even of some of the gypsies, which might have set them thinking. Any way, she felt that Zingari was suspicious of her, that she had somehow come to a knowledge of much of her past life, and had more than once reproached her for acts committed in a distant land, acts which Zingari by some wonderful means had become cognizant of. With her, therefore, she could not remain any longer; she left the Heath and visited different camps from time to time, seldom remaining long in one place, and seldom having intercourse with any outside of the gypsy tribe.

Discouraged after the inquiries she had just made at the inn and at the other places at which she had called, she went off to find her new acquaintance—the woman whom she had agreed to meet—and whom she knew had intended to go direct to the parsonage and leave the dead child with the rector, or with his wife, and to otherwise expose him. She had told the woman that she would meet her again that night, and now she was more anxious than

ever to find her, and learn whether she had succeeded, and whether the inhuman rector was likely to be known in his proper character, and to receive the requital due for his infamy. By this time the clock in the church tower had struck twelve; it was midnight. Maheel was alone in a strange place, and though she had long been accustomed to a solitary kind of life, she now felt unusually dejected. The few people to whom she had lately spoken had stared at her as if she were a runaway from the parish workhouse, or from a lunatic asylum; she felt the need of kind recognition, or of a word of sympathy from some one, and she hastened to try and find the only one in whom she took an interest, and who in return might feel some concern for her; she would even be glad to meet any one, no matter how degraded, provided she could get one sincere word of sympathy or encouragement.

The boldest and most daring in wickedness at times require the advice or society of confederates to nerve them sufficiently for a bad deed; and the vilest, without the evil companionship of their own kind, occasionally feel the restraining power of their better nature, and are thereby rendered unable to commit a crime.

It was now partly so with Maheel; she felt in a manner subdued; there was a transient feeling that she was pursuing the wrong course, that sooner or later sorrow and remorse would follow unless her vicious and unreasonable impulses were counteracted, and that if she did not very soon exercise some controlling power over her intentions, succeeding years would not be those of reformation; her future days would only bring ruin.

As she passed the church yard on her way toward the rectory, she stopped and looked through the iron railing to try and see the little mounds beneath which lay the dead, and to hear the mournful moaning of the wind through the sombre willows, and among the dim grave-stones that marked the resting place of many a once beloved object, of many whose emotions of love, of joy, of sorrow, or of anger, had passed away forever. They too,

thought she, had their real or fancied slights and grievances, they had their resentments and perhaps their revenge; of what consequence was it all now? How much better it would have been had they shown forgiveness. She stopped—she felt a willingness to remain near these silent sleepers—she would at the moment prefer to be quietly laid beneath the green turf, than to go among the living and be harassed again by withering care, and tortured by disappointment. There was a lesson before her on the vanity of human life, a lesson that she had never, perhaps, until now paused to consider. She began to reflect. What a fool I am, what a fool I have been, to waste my life in a useless chase, in a mad effort to try to change or control the feelings or affections of another; and in a wanton determination to torment those who, it may be, have never intentionally done me an injury. She remembered the happy days she enjoyed when she and Raneë had served in the same temple, and had placed flowers upon the shrine of the benevolent Christna; she thought of those past days with regret, and of one of the simple beautiful lessons of Buddha—"For hatred does not cease by hatred, at any time—hatred ceases by love." Then why should I hate Raneë? what after all has she ever done to me? Who has ever wilfully injured me? not one. I have never been cruelly treated like that unfortunate woman who has so won my pity; she has sufficient reason for her enmity, while I show enmity without reason. I will go immediately and find that suffering creature; I shall have in her one human being who can excite my dormant sympathies, and I shall let my compassion for her overwhelm every feeling of resentment that I may still be inclined to harbor against a fellow mortal. Oh! little mounds and tombs, oh, willows and moaning winds, what lessons ye now teach me upon the vanity of human life.

Alas! these impressions were too transient; while these touching evidences of mortality were still before her eyes, while the drooping willows seemed to be like mourners waving and bending with heavy grief, and while the wind

reached her ears like the deep sighs of the bereaved, the evil in Maheel's nature again reigned supreme—there was a cloud between her and heaven, there was one who probably still lived to stand between her and happiness.

The hated Ranee was again in her presence, again her shadow was upon every hope; and Maheel, as she turned with clenched hands and compressed lips to frown upon the black sky, and upon the darkness around her was more like the image of a remorseless fury than of one possessed of a human heart.

She pulled the cloak over her head again, she almost covered her face, and she moved away from the churchyard. The rector's garden was close by, she came to a little back gate from which a pathway ran toward the house—this was a kind of short cut to the rector's kitchen. She had just got inside the gate when she heard voices—a woman's voice, and then a man's voice in loud and angry altercation. She heard a man swear, and a woman make an exclamation; she could not detect the actual words which were spoken, for the wind at the time was too high. Suddenly the voices ceased, and a light appeared at the end of the garden wall; it waved to and fro in a singular manner as if it were held by an unsteady hand. She moved closer and could see two persons in a kind of struggle; she saw a man dragging a woman after him—this she thought must be the infamous rector; she had never seen him before. She recognized the woman, for the light happened to fall on her face—it was the betrayed one. Maheel's impulse was to rush forward and try to rescue her; she was about to do so when her foot tripped against a yielding substance and she nearly fell. She lifted a bundle, and when her hand touched the cold face of the dead child, she drew it quickly away—she guessed at once what must have happened—and she was inclined to let the bundle fall; still she held it, her resolution was already taken; she would first help the woman to get away; they would both go and get into the parsonage and leave the body of the infant with the rector's wife.

She followed the light again; holding the bundle she could not get on fast as she wished; she could now plainly see both persons. The woman was making no apparent resistance. The man kicked at the door, and shoved against it with his shoulder, he still held to the woman. The door was opened, the two got in; some one must have stumbled or fallen on the floor inside; the peculiar sound was sufficient to indicate an occurrence of the kind; she had but just got to the door when it was quickly slammed to and locked on the inside.

Maheel waited a few minutes, she was surprised at the silence; not a word was uttered, and she began to dread that the rector in his desperation might have deprived his victim of life. She went to a barred window; it had a shutter on the the inside and she could see but very little; she listened, she could perceive the flickering of a light, but still no sound of a human voice. She soon, however, heard the heavy steps move toward a corner of the building; the light disappeared from the lower part of the outhouse, and she could hear some one as if trying to force a passage through the dry fodder in the loft; she walked to the end of the outhouse, and just as she got there she heard the partly smothered voice of a man cry: "fire, fire," she ran back to the door and tried to burst it in, but was unable to do so. She went a little off to lay down the bundle in order to make another attempt to force in the door, she heard no further cry, but when she looked up she saw dense black smoke rush from the fabric in every direction, and, almost at once, mighty flames burst through the roof, and leaped around the fated building like demons.

She was terror stricken; she knew that there were two human beings fastened within that outhouse who were doomed; no power on earth could rescue them. She lifted the bundle and ran back to the garden. She turned to look at the building; it was hidden in flame, and under the impulse of the moment, she gave a wild scream, she felt only for the unfortunate woman, and when she saw

the people rush out of the rectory, she instinctively hid behind the wall, and while all was confusion and excitement outside, the idea occurred to her of leaving the child in the rector's dwelling. She rushed into the house, she could see no person; she heard a cry of alarm up stairs, she ran up and saw the rector's wife—the only one who had been left in the place; she left the child on a table in the bedroom, and hurriedly told her what had happened, and when she saw the lady drop suddenly into a chair Maheel made her escape to the hill and watched from there like a ghoul during the remainder of the night.

Toward the dawn she felt greatly wearied—she had stood upon the hill for some hours—and was nearly worn out, the occurrences of the past night had told even upon her rugged constitution. She was in need of a few hours, rest and must find it somewhere. She would enter no house at present; and she was scarcely able to go any great distance. She would go back and bathe her face in the stream near the spot where she had met her late unfortunate companion, and she could enter the old ruin close by and sleep for a while unobserved.

Just as she was about to move away she perceived the dim form of a man approaching; she retired a short distance to escape notice. He was an early traveler and was well wrapped up. Over his heavy overcoat he wore a large shawl, and was evidently prepared to defy chilling mists and sharp winds while on his journey. He carried a small valise; his step was firm and elastic, and he went along with head erect like one who was fearless and full of hope, and who had no forebodings as to the future. When the man passed, Maheel, for some unaccountable reason, looked after him; she never moved from the spot while he was in view, though once or twice she had a singular impulse to follow and speak to him; she watched him until he had disappeared in the thick mist, and when he was lost to her sight, so utter was her sudden feeling of abandonment, of loneliness and of depression, that she could have almost fallen to the earth.

It may sometimes happen, that unknown to ourselves, and when we have least anticipated peril, we escape a danger the knowledge of which might cause a shudder when the risk we have run has been afterward discovered; and we may unwittingly miss a coveted opportunity to serve or to injure, which loss when made known, may lead us to feel that no such fortune will ever return. The man who had passed had just escaped a danger; and Maheel had missed an opportunity for which there was to be no resurrection.

When she got back to the stream she was chilly; she did not like to touch the water, and she went without delay to the old structure. In the dull grey light the ruin seemed to be draped in mourning, and a place more suitable at the time for weeping and lamentation than for quiet repose. Dark festoons of wild vines hung in many parts, giving to the dilapidated walls a funeral appearance; and the mist condensing on the thick ivy came down drip, drip, drip, like veritable tears. Gloomy and repulsive as the place might be to many, it was in keeping with her frame of mind at the moment, and, almost thoroughly overcome, Maheel went in and lay down on the damp ground and was soon asleep.

She slept heavily for some time—a swoon-like lethargy—she dreamt—what a troubled dream! She was startled—she raised her clutched hand to strike—she tried to scream. No such sleep as that could be refreshing or restore the wasted energies of any human being. Of what did she dream? She was in India again; she sat by the bright Ganges in Benares gazing on the beautiful river; she saw Ranee and a multitude of other happy ones bathing therein; but though defiled and anxious to be purified herself, she was forbidden by the priests; she was considered more degraded than a pariah, and was not permitted to enter the sacred stream. The formal renunciation of her faith, and the pollution of Christian baptism, has forever debarred her from that blissful privilege. After this she was in the temple of Siva with Ranee; they were bowing

before the black and bloody image of Kali, who wore her necklace of skulls. A priest demanded with a frightful voice another human sacrifice, and when Maheel went to strike down Raneë as the victim, Maidston entered and delivered her, and Maheel herself was clutched by the savage goddess and was just going to be torn in pieces.

She screamed and awoke in terror, and chilly as the air still was, the perspiration was streaming down her face. When she opened her eyes in her gloomy retreat, she fancied that she was actually in the horrid temple, that the arm which was stretched out toward her was that of the terrible Kali and she shrunk back with another wild cry. "You are affrighted, O worshiper of Siva! What fresh burden of guilt is there on your mind to leave your rest so like the ravings of a demon. Cease your frantic struggles, your power is gone forever. They whom you would persecute are protected, and woe is yours if you further strive again. Arise and hear my words!"

Maheel partially raised herself, and stared wildly at the weird form which stood close to her. This strange figure moved not; the arm was still stretched out and pointing toward the arched entrance; and the solemn voice again repeated: "Arise and hear my words; your life is in danger!"

Maheel started up in a kind of stupor; she was amazed to see Zingari, and paused before she made a reply. "My life in danger! Who wants it? It is a curse to me; it would curse that in which it entered were it even a scorpion. Of what use is my life to me?"

"Live to repent; you may need forgiveness."

"No, I will not repent, I want no forgiveness. I care not for life. If danger comes I defy it."

"Would you like to die swinging by the neck like a Christian's dog?" said Zingari.

"No, I will die by this first," quickly replied Maheel, thrusting her hand into her bosom.

"Stay," said she, "I have plucked your sting. I stole your fancied strength while you slept—you shall never use

this." She held out a small vial of the most active poison, and dashed it against a pile of stones.

Maheel in a fury made a grasp at the old woman, but she stepped outside. "See," said she, "I have not come here alone, I have sufficient help to overpower you in a moment and to deliver you to your enemies. See for yourself?"

Maheel turned her eyes to where Zingari was pointing, and saw two stout gypsy men standing by a tree. "Woman I tell you again that your life is in danger—the hounds of the law are now in pursuit; you are accused of burning that house last night and of causing the death of two people, and if you are taken, nothing will save you—you will be hanged."

The fearful charge caused Maheel to reflect for a moment.

"I never burned the house; I would have saved one of the victims if I could—you were a prophet of evil for the other. Do you forget?"

"Never mind that, I am not to blame if the event has fulfilled the prediction. Christians say that it was prophesied concerning Judas—he could not evade the act of betrayal—but that has not saved him from their hatred. There is a charge against you and your denial will be of no use. Retribution seems to follow you!"

"Let it come," said Maheel frowning, "I care not."

"Can you deny your evil design?" said Zingari. "What brought you to this place? We knew well that you were coming here for a bad purpose; your intentions have been known to me all along, and you have been watched."

"Watched, Ha! Few are able to play the spy against me."

"Fool!" replied Zingari. "Even those men outside heard what you said on this very spot last night to that wretched woman. You would have saved her but you would go and work evil for another. Fool! he that you came here to find passed close to where you stood but eight hours since, You start! yes, he passed you this

dawn almost as near to you as I am, he was even within these walls a few minutes before you came here; he is now at Pendell with Raneë; you start again! Yes, with Raneë, and the child that you robbed them of and sent to slavery has been restored—they are now beyond your power."

"Not forever," cried the now almost frantic Maheel, "I will pursue them, and who can stop me? I will haunt her dreams, and I will yet sacrifice her to Kali." She tried to go hurriedly out, but was again prevented by Zingari. "Stay! accursed fool," said Zingari in a suppressed voice. "See! the law hounds are upon your track."

Three armed men were seen just crossing the little stream. One of these was the landlord of the inn at Betnall, and they went at a quick pace along the road leading to the Heath. Maheel stood back; if arrested her conviction might follow, and she shuddered at the thought of the legal, and brutal mode of Christian retaliation. They were silent until the men had passed out of sight. The day was still cold and misty, it was approaching evening and the wind had freshened and swept through the desolate ruin; and heavy, black clouds seemed to accumulate over the place. Zingari suddenly spoke: "Flee from this place, flee forever; but let me give you a warning: Go not to the Heath again!"

"I must go, I shall go," replied the other in a determined manner.

Zingari looked at her a moment as if she wished to penetrate her very soul, and said: "Must go? Well, as you have disregarded that warning, the shadow is already around you, and I must pronounce your doom. She whispered a few words in her ear, and standing aside from the entrance, said: "Go, you can choose the manner of your death!"

Maheel gave a shriek and rushed out, she fled past the gypsy men outside, and crossed the highway and the wide sterile flat that lay between the road and a cliff overlooking the sea, known as the "Druid's Leap." She stood undis-

mayed upon the brink of the precipice, and stared at the seething waters beneath her; she raised her arms, her black hair streamed in the wind, she gave a frantic cry, and then bounded down to her destruction.

CHAPTER XXXV.

SENTENCE OF DEATH.

THERE was a happy meeting at Pendell; friends long parted had come together again; the curate's little parlor was the scene of a delightful reunion; and seldom has it fallen to the lot of any to feel more exquisite enjoyment than the family group had which were now assembled. Ranee was with her beloved husband once more, and had pressed her child to her heart; Esther had wept upon the bosom of her brother; and the good old curate's eyes were filled when he grasped the hand of his long absent son. They were seated together again; the mildest reprovals were uttered; explanations were given; excuses were offered; tears were shed; smiles were abundant; and it seemed as if the hope of the future could be seen like a glowing celestial arch in the cerulean sky, like a rainbow of the most vivid and beautiful coloring which even lent its blush to the distant horizon.

Charles Meade had of course to explain why he had not written for so long a time; and why it was that his name had been so ingeniously lengthened. He informed them that after he had been in business in a certain establishment in India, he had engaged with other parties, and had been obliged to travel to towns and cities far apart; and being in expectation, month after month, of soon having some permanent place of residence, he did not like to have his friends in England under the impression that he was obliged to wander in the midst of danger, or that he

was never going to have any settled place of abode; he therefore refrained from holding further correspondence in the hope that he might be shortly able to resume it more to his satisfaction. Subsequent losses after his marriage had caused him to delay writing still longer, and then when he had made up his mind to leave the country, he deferred it altogether in the expectation of being able to give a personal explanation to his friends on his arrival in England. The slight alteration in his name was the result of a mere whim. In one of the cities of India in which he had to remain for over a year, there was another person of the same cognomen, and, as there had been some postal irregularity, letters had been wrongly delivered, and other mistakes made, which were very annoying; he had therefore, as a kind of remedy for this state of things, changed his name from Meade to Maidston, and let it so remain. On his arrival in England he had resumed the original orthography of his patronymic. When he called the previous evening at the inn at Betnall he made himself known to the landlord as Mr. Charles Meade, and when Maheel called a few hours afterward to ask for him she was misled by the change; and it seems that he had that very morning while on his way to Pendell, but barely escaped an interview with the dangerous woman.

It was a happy meeting in his old home; there were those now around him that were dearer to him than all others. One true friend was yet absent but he would no doubt soon make his appearance. John Valiant had left Pendell very early that morning for the Heath. It had been agreed that Ranee, Miss Meade, and the curate should accompany him to that place, but he had thought it best for certain considerations to go alone.

He wished to have Zingari visit his friends at the parsonage, and make such explanations respecting the conduct of Maheel, and the motives which that woman must have had for leaving India; and he also desired that Zingari, who had in a manner rescued Hemar and taken maternal care of him for so long a time, should have the

privelege of delivering him to Ranee his mother. This he thought would be a delightful surprise, but through a feeling of delicacy he did not wish to be present at such a meeting. He therefore had Zingari and Hemar conveyed to Pendell early in the day, and he intended to return in the evening and join them all at the curate's; he did not however, anticipate the pleasure which he had himself before night when he found his old friend Charles Maidston among the fresh arrivals at Pendell.

Zingari got to the parsonage with her charge during the forenoon; it is almost needless to allude to the emotions of Ranee when she saw her boy again, and to her subsequent delight when her husband unexpectedly entered the apartment where they all were. He had counted upon finding his wife at Betnall, to which place he had directed her to proceed and remain for him, but when he got there, he was informed by two gypsy men whom he met near the inn, of the shipwreck of the Indiaman that had taken place in Pendell Bay, and that his wife who had been rescued from the ship, and his son who had been left on the Heath, would be found at his father's house in Pendell. He had traveled on foot from Betnall—walking was his favorite exercise—and a few hours march along an English highway afforded him much pleasure; he saw many old familiar places, many quiet interesting spots that he had often visited when a boy, and he spent some minutes gazing at the old ruins to which he often used to stray for bird's nests in summer days long past; but all along the way to Pendell the thoughts of the fearful fire at Betnall had occupied his mind, and he of course related the occurrence to his friend on his arrival.

When Zingari had delivered her young charge to his parents and received their grateful thanks, she exchanged a few kind words with Esther; and she did not forget to express her sympathy to Mr. Meade himself. His sudden dismissal from the curacy which he had held for so many years seemed to her to be grossly unjust. "It's

part of the priestly system in this land," said she to the curate. "You know as well as I do that that whole system is one of deceit and plunder; but you are a priest yourself and must I suppose be silent on that subject. You are one of the ordained; but you would almost rather be anything else. You have now a chance to make your escape from the bondage of an absurd belief, you can assert your freedom from creeds and articles, and from the control of mercenary ecclesiastics; but he who has consented to your wrong, whose heartless cupidity would leave you a beggar, will benefit but little by what he has done to you, to me, and to others. I never can forget that man; he is continually before my mind, like some foul object from which I could turn in disgust. But now," continued she approaching close to him, and scarcely speaking above a whisper, "now mark my words—your venerable bishop will soon be dismissed himself; he must soon leave his wealth, his honor, and his ill-gotten gains, he will soon be poorer than the poorest, he has a long account to answer for, the shadow is now over his dwelling, and another will soon have his bishopric.

"Two of your Church missionaries to the Heath have gone already; there will soon be a third."

This remote allusion to the death of the two rectors was the only one Zingari made; she did not even mention the name of the unfortunate minister who had been destroyed in the burning outhouse the previous night. For some special reason Zingari had stipulated to be driven at once to Betnall; she got there in a few hours and stood by the smouldering ruins. While in that place she heard of the accusation against Maheel, and, as has been related, had subsequently a meeting with Maheel herself; and then she returned that night with the two gypsy men to the Heath.

There were carriages in front of the bishop's residence at Storkchester. His lordship's state vehicle was not however this day among the number; but those that now drove away were of the most stylish and aristocratic kind, and servants, and footmen, in rich and varied liveries,

came and went—appeared and disappeared—in the most stately and ceremonious manner; other carriages followed to remain but a short time, and other bedizzened coachmen and servants, retired in turn, making the spectacle in front of the episcopal palace what might be termed rather brilliant for the dull evening. Many persons as they passed along looked up at his lordship's windows already illuminated; and many no doubt envied those whom they fancied were to be regaled sumptuously that night at the bishop's table. The number of squalid people who were attracted to the spot, and who stood at a respectful distance from so much grandeur, might probably have been under the impression that the three young noblemen—the younger son's of certain lords—who had had episcopal hands laid on them the previous Sunday in the cathedral, were about to receive a lecture upon their duties as priests from the pious bishop who ordained them; while others as they went by, surmised more correctly that there was to be another great entertainment, and that his lordship's hospitable board was to be once more spread to satisfy the dainty appetite of many whose meals were seldom made more palatable by the luxury of hunger; and to indulge the exquisite taste of connoisseurs who could pronounce authoritatively as to the age, the richness, or the peculiarity of a vintage, yet who perhaps for years had never moistened their lips, or slaked their thirst, with a single draught of pure cold water.

A number of guests had assembled in his lordship's mansion that cloudy evening; his lordship's secretary who acted as a kind of master of ceremonies, had smilingly received them and conducted them to the grand saloon which was now a blaze of light. A large and beautiful chandelier hung in the centre of the frescoed ceiling and its lights were reflected in mirrors of the costliest kind. The richly pannelled walls were decorated with rare paintings; some by Claude and by Wouters, and a few by Vandyke, and Poussin and other great artists; there were busts in marble, and the carpet was of the

rarest pattern, displaying a combination of colors which could not be surpassed.

Invitations had been sent out several days previously, and lest it should in any way mar the pleasure of the evening, it was suggested that no allusion should be made to the sad occurrence at Betnall; his lordship might perhaps feel the loss of his old friend, the rector, very keenly, and it was deemed advisable to keep him as yet in ignorance of the fact. The fussy secretary managed to have this understood by those present. "Am sure," said he "'twill reach his lordship's ear soon enough—too soon—must not be mentioned in his presence." Indeed, with many there, the circumstance was of so little importance that its knowledge would not have affected their enjoyment in the least. Death comes in some guise or other every hour. What was the use of being sad? So-called great men were cut down every day; the next day to be almost forgotten—even greatness has its destined oblivion. It was sheer folly to nurse sorrow; its seeds were in every heart and must germinate in due time, but the poisonous weed should be rooted up as quickly as possible. Were the Queen to die to-morrow, guns would thunder, and joy bells ring the next day in honor of her successor. So thought perhaps nine-tenths of his lordship's chosen guests, and the fate of the late rector of Betnall was on the whole considered of little consequence. *Dum vivimus vivamus.*

The spacious room was already well filled with eminent clergymen and other distinguished persons. Literature and Wit, Law, Physic, and Divinity had their most able representatives to enliven the festive hours; and a fair sprinkling of ladies would, of course, be present to grace the occasion. The bishop had esthetical ideas; for no matter how rich might be the plate, how glittering the epergne, how brilliant the Bohemian glass-ware, or how numerous the porcelain vases, there must be a profusion of flowers; and his lordship, like a sensible man, considered that the banquet could not be complete unless the

crowning attraction of all was the smiles of beautiful women.

What a rigid Puritan Paul has been considered by many. In his day, church-going ladies must have been kept under strict subjection, and not allowed to interfere in matters relating to a minister's pecuniary affairs, or in the regulation of anything concerning the sanctuary, or scarcely in the management of anything else. Paul seemed to care little for female society; indeed, there is ample room to surmise that he looked upon women as inferior beings, who were incapable of high attainments. On this account, it has been thought that he was sainted by merest courtesy; his almost total disregard for the rights of women has probably—and no doubt justly—debarred him as yet from entering the “pearly gates”; for some fancy it only reasonable to suppose, that this pious depreciator of the fairest of creation is at present a restless wanderer through some gloomy purgatorium adapted for characters like himself.

If governed by the dictates of Paul, women should be mute in church, even in the midst of the wildest “protracted meeting,” while the lords of creation might shout themselves hoarse. These are his words: “Let your women keep silence in the church; for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience.” And should they become curious and make inquiries—as is natural—he tells them: “And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church.”* Then desirous of forcing subjection he says: “Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” And as if finally desirous of establishing her inferiority beyond all doubt, he gives this convincing proof: “For Adam was first formed, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in the

* The saints make no allowance for women who have no husbands.

transgression. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." The number of ladies at the present day, orthodox or otherwise, who would be willing to subscribe to these doctrines of Paul respecting their own inferiority or subordination, would it is imagined, be very few; and it is very questionable whether any writer, ancient or modern, has done so much to reduce woman socially and intellectually, as the "great apostle" himself.

Just fancy a bishop in this enlightened age issuing a pastoral, and dictating to ladies how they should regulate their *coiffure*: how they should wear their hair, whether long, or short, or brodered: whether ringlets would be permitted, or a "switch" overlooked. Imagine one of this same Paul's successors, ignoring fashion and fashion-plates by describing what "modest apparel" should be—prohibiting silks and finery, and permitting neither rings, nor necklaces, nor bracelets; nor "gold, or pearls, or costly array," and then winding up by proclaiming it improper for any woman to dishonor her head by praying or prophesying uncovered, which amounts to the same thing as saying that her head would be dishonored by wearing, or rather by exhibiting, a diminutive bonnet.

It ought to be a sufficient reproof to this saintly martinet to see how completely Christian ladies in all times have in fact purposely disregarded his silly injunctions respecting themselves, or their apparel, or decorations. Unless in the ball room there is perhaps no other place more conspicuous for excess and extravagance in the matter of dress and finery, than in the sanctuary itself. Moreover, the ladies have another cause of complaint—no very trivial one—against this monastic apostle. He was an old bachelor and recommended others to adopt a life of single blessedness; for in referring to his own condition he said: "For I would that all men were even as I myself." What nonsense! What a pretty condition of affairs it would be were religious devotees to be advised by this

over-zealous teacher! To be sure, a great number of infatuated priests, and romantic women, following the unnatural precepts of Paul, have actually remained celibates—in some cases as has been alleged, perhaps only nominally such—while another class of the clergy, almost one and all, have been in haste to take unto themselves wives, and have shown as little regard for the apostolic recommendation in this respect, as ladies in general have in relation to the prohibitive texts as to “costly array.” Indeed so much has this been the case, that too many of the ordained, as if determined to show their contempt, or marked disapproval of Paul’s injudicious advice regarding matrimony, have cultivated female society after the fashion of David, or Solomon, and to an extent sufficient to cause repeated scandals in the Church, and consternation among the elect.

Reflecting men and women have considered it very strange that holy patriarchs of old, including the man after God’s own heart, should have been permitted to have not only a plurality of wives, but of concubines also; and that Christian commentators should make ample excuses for the condition of such social and domestic economy in those patriarchal times, while so strongly condemning anything approaching such a condition of affairs at the present day; but so long as what is termed “illicit love” is now included by Churchmen among the seven deadly sins, those who teach that such love—though ever so sincere—should be counted an immorality, ought to be particular to try and avoid any such irregularity themselves.

The hours fled swiftly; the bishop’s lady was all smiles, and looked queenly in her graceful folds of magnificent satin. The bishop himself was in his happiest mood, and it was remarked that no one had ever before seen him so hilarious; and he would have been even more so were it not for the absence of his principal chaplain the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt. This gentleman was one of his lordships’s greatest favorites, and scarcely a day was allowed to pass without an hour or two of his enlivening company. The

chaplain had now been away over three days, he had been expected at the banquet, and the bishop felt no slight disappointment by his delay. Several of the guests seemed to enjoy themselves amazingly, that is if it could be called enjoyment to move or rather to force your way through crowded rooms; to be obliged to wear a continual smile, to appear interested in the elegant persiflage and other frivolous chatter of such as claimed your attention; to seem struck by the sage remarks of some stale parliamentarian who fancied that because he was in "the House" he must therefore be possessed of original ideas, and to be forced to laugh at the vapid wit, and thread-bare anecdotes retailed for your edification. Others who cared less for buzz and bustle had entered an apartment specially devoted to Orpheus, where they could meet dowagers and their fair daughters, and listen to the latest and most reliable news from the matrimonial market, and, after that, to "Nelson and the Nile," "Ave Maria," "Schubert's Serenade," and to some touching new love song; and hear some of the choicest compositions of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Auber and Mozart, while a number of the more youthful who could not indulge in the waltz, the polka, or the cotillion, were forced to resort to fashionable flirtation, and to find refuge for whispers and vows, in the curtained recesses of deep bay windows, or in such other retreats as could be found available. Much as these young persons might feel disappointed, they must, of course, be aware that dancing was out of the question; it would never do to exhibit such a conformity to the usages of this wicked world as to favor Terpsichorean exercises in a bishop's residence.

The banquet was at last over; the private discussion of weighty subjects had ceased; opposite politicians, as consistency required, still held opposing opinions. The miserable pretence of economy offered by the factious resistance to the paltry grant of a few score thousand pounds to a prince, and as much for a dowry for the next marriageable daughter of Her Majesty, had been commented on from

different standpoints; and, as it had not been satisfactorily settled who was to be the next Premier, or who would next occupy the "Wool Sack," that question was allowed to lie over. The secular affairs of the Church, and its legitimate claims for increased parliamentary sustentation had elicited some singular opinions; but the clerical disputants had all agreed that the Radicals and Dissenters would certainly unite for the overthrow of that grand bulwark of the British Constitution—the State Church. Old officers had been perplexed about matters at the "Horse Guards"—a reduction of the forces should not be dreamt of—the physical strength of a nation was still asserted to be the true measure of its power; and the abolition of the purchase of commissions in the army was decided to be *infra dig.* and a great injustice. The condition of the Navy had been discussed; the proper construction of ships-of-war had not been hit upon, but all were of opinion that a vast annual appropriation should be made to uphold Britain's supremacy on the ocean. The situation of things in Germany, France, Spain and Italy had been reviewed; a Protestant clergyman had expressed much sympathy for the Pope, but admitted, as remarkable, that those who had decried against his temporal power, and those who still wished to curtail his spiritual authority, were principally members of the Roman Catholic Church. Castellar was pronounced a demagogue; republicanism a fraud and a failure. Dilke was a designing traitor who should be expelled from the House; and there was great unanimity in asserting that the rights and privileges of constituted authority throughout Europe should not be tampered with.

Among the discursive topics introduced during the evening, nothing, however, had been said about colleges; nothing about schools; nothing about hospitals and other humane institutions. No reproach was uttered against legislators who allowed a condition of affairs to exist that brought an increase of paupers, and a consequent increase of crime. Nothing was urged for the suitable relief of the

hungry poor; nothing was suggested for the proper care of destitute women and little homeless children; and nothing as to the necessity of providing decent places of refuge for the thousands of wretched beings who are left unprotected and uncared for, and whose existence is a looming danger, whose squalid poverty is a threat and whose lives are but a prolonged state of misery. No, nothing was said about these foul ulcers on the body politic; the Church, the army, and the Navy, seemed to occupy the first place in the minds of these assembled sages, priests and patriots; and when discussion had ceased, when the last song was sung, when the last fantasia had been executed; when the last good-night was said, and when the last guest had departed, the bishop, still in the highest spirits, and perhaps in a very impressible mood, retired to his spacious library to indulge in a fragrant Havana; to have a few quiet thoughts by himself, and, it might be, to weave dreamy speculations as to his chance of a future archbishopric.

He had wheeled a large, easy chair in front of the fire, and had scarcely taken half-a-dozen whiffs of his segar, when, in the stillness of his retreat, he heard what he imagined was a sigh; he turned around to look and there, at a short distance, in a little recess in the apartment sat his chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt. "What! You here, Vanscourt?" said the bishop much surprised. "Really you are a pretty fellow to be here indulging alone—God knows how long, and so unlike yourself—while we were greatly disappointed that you were not among us! Why did you not send me word that you were here?" The chaplain sat with his head bowed down, his face covered with his hands so very different from his usual manner.

As yet he made no reply, unless another heavy sigh, deeper than the first, might have been considered an appropriate answer. The bishop approached him and laid his hand upon his shoulder. "Ah Vanscourt!—I see how it is: you have been with that sad fellow Rockett and

—and—I fear the Betnall air has not agreed with you. Eh!”

“My lord!” ejaculated the chaplain overpowered with emotion.

“My lord!—these are the only two words you have for me now—all you have to spare after your flight into Egypt, and away from that Philistine. You have no doubt left Rockett half dead, when you come back here so nearly dead yourself.”

“Alas, my lord!” continued the chaplain still more visibly affected.

“Three words! O, Vanscourt, what a dose of fiery fluid you must have taken to check the music of your tongue! Well, we shall have another word next time, and then a full round sentence. You like a pun, Vanscourt—give me a sentence of any kind except the sentence of death.”

“My lord, my lord,” again he faltered.

“Four words—not fairly a sentence yet—we shall have it in good time.” The chaplain now looked up, his face was pale, his eyes blood-shot, and his hand trembled; yet the bishop mistook these symptoms and attributed them to a different cause. Well, Vanscourt, you *do* look half dead! Rockett must have been determined to send you up sky-high—you are pretty elevated yet—now is it not so, Vanscourt?”

“Good God, my lord, have you not heard the dreadful news?”

“News?” inquired his lordship with the faintest possible smile. He now saw that the chaplain was in his sober senses, and that his manner was strangely serious. “Dreadful news! No, Vanscourt, I care to hear no dreadful news. But what is it; what is it?”

The chaplain now arose from the chair and stood trembling before him. The bishop was really startled at his appearance. “Dreadful news, my lord—I see that you cannot have heard it yet, and to explain all I must indeed frame a sad, sad sentence for you. Rockett—the unfortunate John Rockett, your old friend Rockett, was burnt to

death last night in his out-house at Betnall, and his very bones have been reduced to ashes!"

The words were scarcely more than uttered when the bishop fell suddenly to the floor; the secretary rushed into the room in great alarm. Doctors were soon in attendance; all that medical skill and experience could do avail nothing. A fatal sentence had been pronounced by the chaplain—next day a coroner's jury had returned—"Death by apoplexy." In two days afterward the cathedral was draped in mourning; there was a great funeral; and Thomas Sumpter, late bishop of Sturckchester was borne away in solemn pomp, and gathered to his fathers.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OMINOUS CLOUDS.

THERE are times and seasons in the life of almost every individual when the most degraded can perform a virtuous act; or when temptation comes with such irresistible power as to bring the most exemplary to the verge of crime.

What trivial circumstances have often changed the whole course of a man's future, either leading him on to a career of usefulness, or downward as an obstructive to all progress. No one should feel too confident in his own power of resistance, or triumph over those who have had to succumb, for though a man should fancy himself invulnerable to the attack of an enemy, Evil may approach in such a modest, insinuating guise as to succeed in its first overture; and perhaps to rule and triumph forever after. Our imagined constancy to upright principles may often be only a spurious adherence to rectitude arising from continued success; were adversity to be an every day companion, we might not hesitate to seek its riddance by arts and stratagems inconsistent with honor or honesty. Instances are constantly occurring in proof of these positions.

Sentiments of this kind were expressed during a long conversation in the curate's little parlor at Pendell, and while reviewing the character of Maheel and others who were forever more beyond the influence of praise or censure. The curate and a few of his friends had met to

spend an evening together, and Mr. Valiant was of course among the number. It was more than two weeks since the calamity at Betnall, and nearly that time since the great funeral of the bishop of Storkchester had taken place. Mr. Meade gave them an account of the imposing ceremony; he had had another journey to that city; all the clergy of the diocese had been requested to attend the solemn service in the Cathedral; and as the curate was among the number of those invited, he of course considered it obligatory on him to make an appearance, and it occurred to him that as he had heard nothing lately about his successor to the curacy, the bishop's death might probably cause some new arrangement to take place, and that he might still be included among the number of active clergy, and allowed to serve for a time longer in his old parish. This of course would be the wish of his heart; and it is to be concluded that the wish in this case was "father to the thought." He knew that Mr. Valiant would be glad to have him on the Heath, but still he would prefer his old home and would not wish to change it until he left it for his grave.

How different this time were his feelings upon his arrival in Storkchester to what they had been on a former occasion! Then he had been almost driven from his lordship's door like a vagrant; now, no pert servant in plush livery made his appearance to close the door upon him; no smirking secretary, like a courteous dragon stood in the way to prevent his entrance, the door was open to permit another to pass out—one who was never to return. No carriage was in waiting to give his lordship an airing, but a hearse with towering black plumes was there to take him to the grave. The wide hall was gloomy; he could enter and go among others that loitered in the dim apartment which but a few nights previously had been the scene of such gay festivity. The whole house was made to appear gloomy; and pictures, and mirrors, and busts, and statuettes were clouded and draped—as human beings were—to make them look what they were

not. The faces of trained mourners were gloomy; and what made it seem more sad and gloomy than all to one like the curate, who was troubled with a feeling heart, there was no evidence of sincere grief in the whole costly display. When the massive coffin was borne out, and taken down the marble steps to be conveyed to the cathedral, there were bowed heads and solemn faces, but no voice of sorrow could be heard, no child's tear could be seen, no wife's smothered sob reached the ear; there was nothing but a mere ceremonial of sadness, a studied counterfeit of grief—not the slightest symptom of natural feeling to touch a stranger's heart.

The next morning after the funeral, before Mr. Meade started on his return home, the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt, the new rector of Pendell, called on him at the hotel. The rector, who appeared to be very much cast down, informed him that the late bishop's nephew, the Rev. Mr. Sofin, who had agreed to accept the curacy of Pendell, had—probably in consideration of greater pay and more leisure—already changed his mind, and accepted the chaplaincy of a frigate then under orders for foreign service. Mr. Vanscourt admitted that he thought Mr. Meade had the best right to the curacy—he had always thought so—but the late bishop was most anxious to have Mr. Sofin, his nephew, under his (Mr. Vanscourt's) charge at Pendell, and he could not refuse his consent to such an arrangement; for he was, he said, mainly indebted to the late bishop for his appointment as rector of that parish. Now, however, there was nothing in the way, and if Mr. Meade would only consent to serve as curate, five pounds a year should be added to his salary. The curate had accepted the offer at once, and returned home delighted. He was congratulated by many of his friends; Sarah Afton and old Stephen were greatly pleased, and there was rejoicing among several of his old parishioners—two persons alone were disappointed.

Mr. Valiant expressed his regret openly; he had, he said, fully expected to have Mr. Meade with him on the

Heath, and now this new arrangement might seriously affect his plans for a time. Esther said nothing, she did not wish to have her father think she was dissatisfied; but from the manner in which he had been already treated by his spiritual superiors, she felt his position still insecure; she would have preferred that he had given up the curacy. He was getting too old for the duties of the parish, and Mr. Valiant's proposal was one which, under present circumstances, would have been most beneficial. It would be with the greatest regret that she took leave of the old house in which she had spent her youthful days; but she would have to leave it some time. It was the parsonage of the parish, and the property of the church, and, as her father was getting old, she could scarcely expect that they would be able to remain in it much longer—it might soon be occupied by others.

Charles Meade, who had succeeded in recovering a large amount of money, had tempting offers to commence business in London, and he and Ranee had pressed Esther to accompany them, and she had agreed to do so. She wished to see more of the metropolis and to hear one or two of the great organists to be found in that city; and now, were her father to remain, how could she possibly manage to leave him. Had he gone to the Heath he would have been comfortably situated and well cared for, and she could at the same time have an opportunity of visiting London. She had often heard flattering speeches regarding her musical abilities, and had been informed that she could distinguish herself there; and for certain other reasons she was more desirous than ever of going to the great city. She really wished to be away for a time; she had some confidence in her own powers, and a laudable ambition to become better known in the musical world; but the question still was if her father chose to stay in Pendell, how could she get away; it was to her a difficult problem to solve, and its consideration caused her no little perplexity.

Mr. Valiant was sorry to learn that the curate had

decided to remain for a time longer at Pendell and again expressed his regret at the decision. "I gave our friends to understand," said he addressing Mr. Meade, "that you would soon be one of our number, and all were pleased to hear it, I have you know a curious lot of persons to control and civilize, and I relied much on your assistance; not in fact on your efforts alone, but I had hoped that through you we could obtain the aid of another whose influence would have been invaluable. You still desire to remain in Pendell out of a partiality to your old parish; you cannot by any means do so much good in this place as you could among my friends on the Heath. Here a majority of your parishioners would refuse to listen to teaching which might chance to conflict with their long established opinions; here your instruction is limited to the explanation of certain doctrines, the worth of which many dispute, and the value of which you may be doubtful of yourself; there you might find minds which if not altogether blank as to certain tenets, might be more impressible, and you might be far more successful in disseminating scientific truth. After what has occurred in relation to yourself you can have no certainty that you may not soon be asked, or rather notified, again to retire in favor of some new successor."

"They will not disturb me for at least a year," said Mr. Meade. "During that time I can better prepare for a change. It affected me very much to be dismissed so unexpectedly. I did intend to go with you to the Heath; it is now indeed a pleasant place to what it once was, but you know my promise to you was partly conditional; I scarcely expected to be restored to the curacy, and was grateful for your kind offer; and, to compensate in a measure, I will promise to make a weekly visit to the Heath, and, perhaps by the end of another year, I may fully decide on going there altogether. The scenery here may be more inviting, yet I will not hesitate to tell you that the instructions which I am obliged to give are more from the head than from the heart; I now begin to

feel that I ought to follow Truth even were it to a seeming desert; for where truth is there can be no bleak sterility, and where all are its faithful followers there must be continued peace and harmony. Yes, before the end of another year I shall decide. But then Esther may be away."

"Away!" said Mr. Valiant. He had not been informed of her intention to go to London. "Away? Why, our friend Miss Meade is not surely going to leave us?" John Valiant was evidently much concerned as to the nature of the reply he might receive.

"Oh, yes," said Ranee, "Esther has promised to come and stay with us in London, her father will be able to come and visit us often—for that matter he might remain with us altogether. Any way while he is here Sarah and old Stephen will be company for him and see that he is well taken care of. Esther must come with us; that is positively settled."

"Don't say positively," said Esther laughing, "I fear I shall not be able to go for a long time. My father has changed his mind and decided to remain here for another year. How can I leave him?"

"Nonsense! You must go Esther," said the curate, unwilling to disappoint her. "You must go child. I shall be able to get along famously. You know how careful old Sarah was of me when you were lately indisposed; and then I had Stephen to remind me of old times, and to talk of those who had lived and flourished, or struggled here when I first came to the parish. Yes, go Esther, I want you to see something of the world, and London, you have often been told, is a good representation of it—a world in itself. You must go child, you must go."

"Besides," said Ranee, "I have heard more than one say, since I have been here, that fame and fortune are in London awaiting your arrival—perhaps a rich husband. Now don't blush that way. I have been told all about that wealthy lord who was struck by your musical performance, as well as by your personal appearance. You know the noble widower I mean—he whe paid you so

much attention some time ago at Betnall during a visitation of the late bishop. I have heard the whole story."

John Valiant who had listened to every word, suddenly looked up amazed; he stared at the curate inquiringly, and his anxious look might at once be interpreted to mean—Can this possibly be true?

"Oh, yes," said her brother following up the attack, while Esther's face was one glow of crimson. "Esther has surely made a conquest; old Sarah told me about it, and how that Lord Wedmore would have called here himself to pay his respects and hear her play again, and perhaps to say something very particular, were it not for the late rector of this parish, Mr. Morton, who for some reason put him off by saying that Esther was engaged to a clergyman in a distant parish. Is it not so father?"

Mr. Valiant grew still more amazed; there was an expression of pain in his face; and Esther was apparently overwhelmed, she was thoroughly confused; she was unable to speak a word, or to leave the room, and she could only look appealingly at Ranee and at her brother.

The curate did not seem inclined to encourage conversation on that subject, but as he had been referred to by his son, he merely said:

"Oh, I believe there was something of the kind, but 'tis of no consequence now. Let it pass. Esther has no such aims. I wish her to go to London for a far different purpose, and when we arrange matters here a little, she shall follow you. I will see her off myself."

"Lord Wedmore is in London at present; is he not?" asked Ranee.

"Of course he is," replied Charles Meade, "and if we delay at Pendell much longer, it is quite probable that the noble widower may pay us a visit himself. I have also learned that he was greatly annoyed at the late Mr. Morton for having misled him with respect to Esther. But now I believe her chances are better than ever."

Why was it that John Valiant remained so silent; he was generally ready to take part in social conversation,

but now he seemed disinclined to say a word? The day was near its close, the sun had set, and the shades of evening filled the room. Why were his reflections of so sombre a character? why was he impressed at the time with the idea that the sunbeam of his hopes had probably faded away for ever, and that his future years would be passed in twilight and in shade? And why was it that Esther, already so disconcerted, felt such relief when the subject was dropped, and when she escaped from the apartment to look after some household affair?

For some time afterward—in fact during the greater part of the evening—Mr. Valiant was not altogether in his usual lively mood; he was occasionally in a state of abstraction, and seemed to hear but little of the conversation which took place. When tea was over, they had some music, and Raneë, who had a fine voice, sang a favorite piece, and was accompanied by Esther on the piano. The beautiful melody had, however, a saddening effect on Mr. Valiant, and it was not until matters connected with the late bishop and his family had been talked over, and some speculations made as to who might be his successor, that he had become in any degree himself again. In reference to this subject, he said, with animation and evident earnestness:

“Were every bishop in England to be deposed to-morrow, and no others appointed, could there, or would there be any possible loss to the nation? What real benefit is the office to any save to the incumbent? Any virtue said to be connected with it, is only like too much pertaining to religion—merely imaginary. England has—even in this enlightened and scientific age—to support *twenty-eight* bishops, including two arch-bishops; the people have scarcely a word to say as to the choice or selection of these men, and the useless burden of so many lordly prelates, is an annual cost to the country of over *one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling*;* besides perquisites of

* About three-quarters of a million dollars.

various kinds, which add largely to the sum total. Now what real valuable service do these pretenders give in return for this immense sum? If an admission be at all made respecting any benefit conferred by these consecrated impostors, it may simply be said, that they are as beneficial in their way as the half-hundred chaplains who are required for the special edification of the Queen.*

Were the professions of these pious dignitaries sincere, they would, of necessity, have some conscientious scruples as to the acceptance of exorbitant sums for nominal services; but in their extraordinary greed, and in helping to exhaust the national resources, they reduce themselves to a lower position than that of political place men whose offices are the veriest sinecures. Pauperism is on the increase around us; sufficient funds cannot be raised to meet the appeals of those engaged in the work of benevolence; and yet money is abstracted from the revenues of the country to sustain Episcopal drones in luxury, while at the same time, many humane institutions are languishing for support. No wonder that discontent prevails in England. The people feel themselves legally plundered in order that priestly pensioners and a host of others may be dignified and pampered, and they almost despair of finding a legal remedy; even the very land is monopolized to such an extent as that not more than one man of six hundred and fifty persons owns a foot of English soil. No wonder, therefore, that thousands rush annually from these shores to find a home in a strange but more hospitable country, and that you need a standing army to overawe those who are obliged to remain, and who are restless and discontented while forced to bear unjust burdens, and submit to the grossest mismanagement of public affairs.

You have a costly State Church establishment—arch-

* The spiritual guardians of the Queen of Great Britain, rank and file, may be summed up as follows: One domestic chaplain to Her Majesty; one to Her Majesty's household at St. James'; forty-eight chaplains in ordinary to Her Majesty; eight priests in ordinary to Her Majesty. It may, therefore, be considered reasonable to suppose that Her Majesty is safe.

bishops, bishops, lesser spiritual dignitaries, hundreds of clergy, and thousands of other priests and preachers of every sect and degree swarming all over the land; they seem wilfully blind to the political favoritism and injustice which prevail in the so called land of freedom; and to the pitiful poverty and gross ignorance which obtrude in every part of the kingdom. If these priestly mercenaries were true men, such a state of things could not long continue; at times they make feeble, but ostentatious effort to relieve the distressed; but so long as they pretend to believe, and persist in teaching, religious and political fables, so long will superstition enfeeble the intellect, and usurpation make men servile; so long as they assert that it is decreed by a benevolent Providence that a minority must of necessity be very rich, and the great majority degradingly poor, the ignorant poor will submit to be robbed of their natural rights, and no suitable effort will be made to stay the hand of the despoiler. Assurance is the only diploma held by many a professor. These assuming priests are most obtrusive in every relation; they claim precedence as having been invested with superior authority; they arrogate to themselves the right to instruct, and perhaps just as often the right to dictate; and instead of leading in social, political, or scientific progress; they denounce the so-called infidel, and their advanced ideas, and they lag behind too frequently as obstructives, until forced onward by public common sense, or by unerring demonstration, and then they as frequently rush to the front and unblushingly claim to be principals in the march of improvement."

Mr. Valiant would be supported in these assertions by a large majority of educated thinkers in Great Britain. Ministers of the Gospel, while having stood so long in the way of progress, will oftentimes demand: "What have infidels done to benefit mankind?" The reply is, they have been nearly always the despised leaders of progress. They have been the most daring scientists and philosophers—daring because they feared not to contradict "in-

spiration," and to prove many of its alleged divine truths grossly incorrect. They were foremost in the anti-slavery movement, even while bishops and priests were defending slavery as being a "divine institution;" there is abundance of proof of this; they have been among the most active leaders in the temperance movement; they have been prominent among the workers for the abolition of imprisonment for debt; for woman's rights; for the abolition of the death penalty; and they have always been advocates for progress and humanity in every direction. So patent are these facts, that even a portion of the religious press have acknowledged that:

"Among all the earnest-minded young men who are at this moment leading in thought and action in America, we venture to say that four-fifths are skeptical of the great historical facts of Christianity.

What is told as a Christian doctrine by the churches claims none of their consideration, and there is among them a general distrust of the clergy, as a class, and an utter disgust with the very aspect of modern Christianity and of church worship.

This skepticism is not flippant; little is said about it. It is not a peculiarity alone of radicals and fanatics; most of them are men of calm and even balance of mind, and belong to no class of ultraists. It is not worldly and selfish. Nay, the doubters lead in the bravest and most self-denying enterprises of the day."*

Another Christian paper has said:

"To the shame of the Church, it must be confessed, that the foremost in all our philanthropic movements, in the interpretation of the spirit of the age, in the practical application of genuine Christianity, in the reformation of abuses in high and low places, in the vindication of the rights of man, and in practically redressing his wrongs in the intellectual and moral regeneration of the race, are the so-called infidels in our land.

* *New York Evangelist.*

The Church has pusillanimously left, not only the working oar, but the very reins of salutary reform in the hands of men she denounces as inimical to Christianity, and who are practically doing with all their might for Humanity's sake, what the Church ought to be doing for Christ's sake; and if they succeed, as succeed they will in abolishing slavery, banishing rum, restraining licentiousness, reforming abuses and elevating the masses, then must the recoil on Christianity be disastrous. Woe, woe, woe, to Christianity when infidels by the force of Nature, or the tendency of the age, get ahead of the Church in morals, and in the practical work of Christianity. In some instances they are already far in advance. In the vindication of truth, righteousness, and liberty they are the pioneers, beckoning a sluggish Church to follow in the rear."*

This testimony ought to be sufficient; much of such could be given, but were it still more copious, clerical fulminations would be heard again, and the question would be unscrupulously repeated in the pulpit, and on platform: "What have infidels done to benefit mankind?"

Now as the Reverend clergy and Christian men generally are not backward in claiming a moral superiority over unbelievers, let us hear what an eminent historian says on the subject of clerical faithfulness.

Upon his installation as rector of St. Andrews University, in April 1869, Dr. Froude in his address said:

"We have had thirty years of unexampled clerical activity, churches have been doubled; theological books, magazines, reviews, newspapers have been poured out by hundreds of thousands, while by the side of it there has sprung up an equally astonishing development of moral dishonesty. From the great houses in London to the village grocer, the commercial life of England has been saturated with fraud. So deep has it gone that a strictly honest

* *New York Independent.*

tradesman can hardly hold his ground. You can no longer trust that any article you buy is the thing it pretends to be. We have false weights, false measures, cheating and shoddy everywhere. Yet the clergy have seen all this in absolute indifference; and the great question which at this moment is agitating the Church in England is the color of the ecclesiastical petticoats. Many a hundred sermons have I heard, many a dissertation on the mysteries of faith, on the divine mission of the clergy on apostolical succession, on bishops and justification, and the theory of good works, and verbal inspiration, and the efficacy of the sacraments, but during these thirty wonderful years never one that I can recollect on common honesty, nor those primitive commandments—thou shalt not lie—and thou shalt not steal.”*

Even while Christian priests are deploring the sad condition of the Heathen, a thousand certificates could be procured to show that the “common honesty” of Pagan and Mohammedan countries is far in advance of that in Christian lands.

Mr. Valiant continued:

“Presumption usurps the place of talent. In every land that I have visited I have found priests of almost every creed willing to indulge in notions of their own superiority. I ask are Christian priests behind the heathens in this respect? Christian priests generally assume to be possessed of superior knowledge, and as the Christian faith in this land is powerful and popular, they assume to give a tone to public opinion and too often debauch the minds of legislators; even the Press, which should be free, has become deplorably subservient to their fanaticism, and it consequently follows that little or no progress or not sufficient progress, is made in humane and merciful enactments. What class of men deserve to be branded as hypocritical imposters more than those who exclaim in pulpit and on platform against the love of wealth, and

* From the *Presbyterian a Monthly Record* for May 1869—Lovell Montreal.

against worldlings who are intent upon adding house to house, and barn to barn, while they themselves are in numerous instances most noted examples of cupidity? What class of men should be denounced as false teachers more than they who tell men at the present day to believe that the myths, the mysteries, the contradictions, and the absurdities of so-called inspiration are pure truth, when reason and the higher inspiration of science plainly demonstrate the contrary. During ages progress was kept at a stand still by incorrigible ecclesiastics—they can stop it no longer. The professions of the clergy respecting indifference to the great world, and the lessons they give concerning charity, humility, forgiveness, and brotherly love, and their regard for the poor, are frequently but mere pulpit utterances, and the shallowest verbiage. Who more than they are so ready to flatter the rich, or become obsequious to the powerful? Who more addicted to empty display where they think it can be safely exhibited by gairish pomp and ceremony in places of worship? and who are more bitter in detraction against those who dare to think for themselves, and to dispute their pretensions and authority? As for their regard for the poor, many of them no doubt have feeling hearts like other men, and would like to alleviate the wretchedness of poverty; but as a general thing, though ostentatious in their efforts to relieve distress, as they are in most of their other public efforts, the imaginary demands of the Almighty—at least this is the plea—have their first consideration. Instead of urging the erection of additional and vastly superior homes for the widow, and the orphan, the aged, poor, the infirm, and the destitute, the most wonderful exertions are made to increase the number of lordly structures with towering steeples—each of which is called a “House of God”—and to secure this object they have no compunction in soliciting the child’s pence, the widow’s mite, and the poor man’s shilling, even though the pittance should be required to provide food; and though increasing thousands of miserable paupers should

be obliged to wander about without a home or a place of shelter."*

During these remarks, the curate made no observation; he listened to the reflections made against the class to which he belonged, more like a person who agreed with what had been said, than like one who might feel inclined to dispute the correctness of the severe assertions. Esther seemed astonished at Mr. Valiant's earnestness of manner and was almost disposed to believe that much of what had been stated by him was but too true, and sufficient to arouse others to think more on such matters; still, though a great deal she thought might be said against the worldly disposition of the clergy—particularly those of her own church—who she believed were acting contrary to Christian precepts, she was confident that the Christian religion was superior to all others. She had never as yet allowed herself to question its doctrines; nor did she wish to harbor doubts sufficient to lead to an investigation of its claims. In this respect Esther was only like the great majority of her sex—a blind believer in the incomprehensible.

"There must be certainly something wrong in the management of public affairs in England," said Charles Meade. "England ought to lead in efforts of benevolence and humanity; she has done much in this respect, but much, much more is wanting within her own borders; for still it is asserted that pauperism is on the increase. During the short period since my return, I have been besieged by more beggars than I ever saw during an entire year, or even during a longer period in India. As for London, in spite of the police, one is importuned one way or another for alms or assistance almost continually. The paupers of London are conspicuous in almost every direction. It is shocking to think that with all its reputed wealth, there should be in England and Wales alone, over three hundred and fifty thousand children under sixteen years

* See Note 16. Respecting clerical crimes and frailties.

of age who are solely depending on the precarious maintenance of public and private charity."

"I tell you what, my friends," continued Mr. Valiant, "there must be a change; such gross injustice will not be allowed to exist. It is gross injustice to have the fee simple of the land of this country in the hands of a few non-producers. You must set the land free for the industrious. The monopolizers of the soil cry out about existing rights, these, I contend, are existing wrongs; all men have natural rights, one of the principal of which is, a right to a portion of the land for cultivation. Emigration may be suggested, it is good in its way, but not a remedy for British pauperism. Pauperism should not be allowed to exist; it can be stamped out. Set free the land for the industrious; gradually get rid of war appropriations, and increase those for the purposes of peace—other nations can be induced to follow the example. Get rid of your army of costly state pensioners, of your army of useless priests, your army of trained warriors and of your army of aristocratic and titled incumbents and useless officials. These measures may be flippantly pronounced rigorous, unjust, and even impossible; but they can be none of these if attempted for the sole benefit of a suffering people. Impossible? Elect legislators of the right kind and the thing is done; a majority in Parliament in favor of equal justice, humanity, and thorough civilization, will overwhelm every despot and usurper in the land; and the demon of war and destruction will be put to flight forever. With such a majority what immense benefits would follow! You would have a government which instead of being criminally lavish would be conducted on principles of strict economy, you would have no need of oppressive burdens of taxation, and no special exemptions from a fair assessment or liability to contribute to the national resources; and the destitute of the nation, the orphan, the infirm, and the aged poor, would be supported by the nation; it is now done only in part as charity; it must eventually be done as an individual right. Let England lead, other

nations I feel satisfied will follow. What! you exclaim a general disarming? I say a general disarming; a speedy destruction of missiles of war, or their rapid conversion into implements of peace.† Professing Christians have talked long enough about turning spears into pruning hooks, let them attempt it now; the time was never more propitious for a beginning. Some government will have to make the attempt. I say again, let England take the honorable lead and the alleged impossibility will quickly disappear. In times not very remote, men in most civilized nations—or what were called such—went armed; it was thought necessary for self-protection; but now in like communities swords have been throw aside, and men generally decide their quarrels or disputes, by law or by arbitration without the aid of either rapiers or revolvers. It must soon come to this among nations.

Priestly influence or example, however, will never bring about this needful state of things. Physical force has been the right hand of clerical despotism; when prayers or threats, or blessing or cursing, could not prevail, the clergy have never hesitated to suggest or to approve of a resort to the sword. Until lately the Pope kept his own standing army; when saints or angels, or ‘the glorious army of martyrs’ were found too dilatory, or too powerless, shotted guns performed the required miracle. Priests have blest the weapons of warriors, and have become man-slayers themselves. Cromwell’s preachers urged his pious legions on to battle, and invoked the Almighty to grant them success. Prayers for naval and military triumphs are offered in the churches. Cathedrals are often decorated with banners taken in some bloody struggle; and regimental colors cannot be properly dedicated without the chaplain’s prayer. If war is to be abolished, do not wait for the ministers of the Gospel to help you; when

† It is estimated that *eighty-three per cent* of the revenue of Great Britain is expended for purposes of war and only *seventeen per cent*, for other affairs!

you are sure of success, they will volunteer their aid.* You must begin at the beginning, and the A. B. C. of this and every other great reform in the United Kingdom, will depend upon the intelligence of the electors and their careful selection of proper representatives to Parliament; send true men there, and victory is assured. The Commons of England is the political Omnipotence of the British nation.

Thought is the associate of intelligence. British workmen, and the British people generally, have begun to think more about public matters than they have hitherto done; there must, therefore, be a change; the injustice of centuries must come to an end. You may make up your minds that there will be a revolution of some kind. (may it be a bloodless one!) which will sweep away every monster abuse that has been created and nurtured by despotic authority. It requires no far-seeing eye to detect the little cloud in the distance; it requires no great discrimination to predict what is likely to follow. Great abilities are not always necessary for elucidation; the light of a candle may sometimes make a printed page as legible as the light of the sun. There are unknown and unassuming men at the present day in England who can tell you that a vast change is impending; that the plunder of the public for the almost exclusive benefit of certain favored classes, will no longer be tolerated; and that neither the class of the very rich, nor the class of the very poor, if such anomalous conditions chance to remain, shall be allowed to control the destinies of the nation. Justice and intelligence alone shall govern; and old England shall no longer be a vast hive for royal, aristocratic,

* Pope Clement XIII sent to Field Marshal Daun, the Austrian Commander a *consecrated hat and sword*; such gifts had been previously given to those who had subdued unbelievers or subjugated barbarians.

An English paper lately said: "In the morning the bishop (Wilberforce) preached to the local volunteers, and pointed out there was nothing sinful or contrary to the Divine Word in a man being a soldier. That a war might be righteous one he held to be supported by the Old and New Testament."

or clerical drones; or a wide domain for the indulgence of special and unjust prescriptive rights. This is what now appears in the future for Britain, no matter what either Prime Minister or archbishop may assert to the contrary."

Mr. Valiant was so absorbed with his subject, that he spoke to the few about him with as much energy as if he were addressing a vast assembly of the misgoverned of all Europe; he made, however, a most favorable impression on those that heard him. Esther Meade, in particular, was struck by the force of his remarks. The experience which she had already had, led her to entertain no very high regard for the motives which influenced spiritual dignitaries that had the regulation of Church affairs. In visiting the poor around Pendell, she had often been obliged to witness deplorable scenes of poverty, and it caused her to reflect a great deal as to the true origin of the wide social differences which existed on every side.

When the fervid speaker had finished his remarks, the curate, as if at last impelled to speak, said reflectively: "Well, well, I only wish that right and justice throughout the world had ten thousand such advocates as you; the great mass of the wronged and the oppressed would become more enlightened, and tyranny and imposition of every kind would soon be confined to narrow limits,"

"Be one of the number, then," said Mr. Valiant. "The cause of mental freedom alone is the grandest that can engage the attention of the most gifted writer, the most eloquent orator, or the most distinguished philanthropist. There are, even in England itself, over ten times ten thousand intelligent men who lament the accumulation of political and religious despotism that still exists all over the world, and at the infatuation of dupes that submit; yet, sad to say, a majority of these men would perhaps be afraid to speak out openly and denounce the abuses which have kept the most industrious so long in bondage. They see Liberty still in fetters, and dare not stand out before all, and strike a sturdy blow to set her free. He who has the password of freedom, and who is

afraid to whisper it to one who has it not, is simply a traitor to principle; and no aphorism can be more true than that which says: 'He who hides a truth, betrays a trust.' " *

It had been agreed that the curate and his friends should visit the Heath the next day. Mr. Valiant had been anxious to have them witness the great improvements that had been made, and the gratifying progress that had taken place in the conduct and disposition of the once wild heathens of the plain. However, after he had left the curate's house that night, and retired to his lodgings, he began to reflect upon what he had heard that evening, and he grew quite indifferent whether he ever again saw the Heath—it might be for evermore the blackest desert to him. Never in his life had he felt so despondent. The weather had become suddenly tempestuous, and the rain came streaming down as if nature were in a fit of despair. For the time, he ceased to take any interest in others, and he began to dwell seriously upon his own uncertain chance of domestic happiness. The curate, he had been told, would still remain in Pendell; and Esther—Esther—he dwelt upon the name—would most probably be far away. He had counted upon the companionship and assistance of the one, and without the other—without her presence—life would be only a

* Scientific men are generally fearless in giving an opinion as to the merits of so called "Sacred Records," or the reliance to be placed on alleged theological facts. Yet even among such men there may be some who are still too timid to confront public opinion; though they may know that such opinion is based upon a myth. And this timidity instead of being censured meets the approval of those whose interests or whose prejudices lead them to urge on others to a blind belief in the still popular fictions of "Inspiration." As an evidence of this the *Montreal Witness* quotes approvingly regarding the undignified course pursued by Prof. Faraday.

It seems that the Professor *refused* to investigate Christian theology from a conviction that there was "an absolute distinction between religious and ordinary belief." (1) He declined to "Apply these mental operations which he thought good in respect of high things to the highest." (1)

(From the Student and Intellectual Observer, as published in the *Montreal Daily Witness* of March 26 1870.)

heavy burden. What would wealth, honor, or distinction be without her to share it? But from that which he had already heard, it was almost certain that she would be attracted by a title, that her hand would be bestowed upon a lordly suitor; and that she was lost to him forever.

Tortured with apprehension, he paced the room for hours. Then he sat thinking; he still heard the patter of the rain, and while alone in the silent night, his imagination had free scope. He saw Esther the centre of intellectual attraction in London; he saw her surrounded by noble and wealthy admirers; he saw her smile on another, but turn coldly aside from him; he saw how graciously a noble widower had been received; and, at last, his heart beat wildly when he saw a brilliant company, and Esther in her bridal robes. O, how beautiful she looked standing before the bishop and his attendant clergy in St. Paul's Cathedral; he heard the organ's rich peal, and then he heard her solemnly repeat the words of the marriage service: "I, Esther, take thee, Lord George Wedmore, to be my —" He could hear no more; he started up and paced the room again; his agitation was great; for an hour longer he could not think of rest. At last he became wearied and lay down, almost willing to die, willing to sleep, and willing to seek solace, even in dreams.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE RAINBOW.

THE faint blush of dawn came stealing along the verge of the horizon, like some celestial messenger that yet hesitated to awake from its slumbers the youthful day. The stars seemed to linger, as if to welcome its approach; and the deep azure sky slowly changed its gemmed apparel, and appeared in its auroral vesture of ruddy golden light, and its increasing glow soon overspread the magnificent arch of heaven, dispersing every shade of night.

The morning was beautifully fine. The sun rose in majestic grandeur like a benign divinity, after suddenly annihilating the darkness, the mist, and the gloom that had prevailed, and now spreading his dazzling glory, far and wide, over a newly created world. A thousand birds greeted his earliest beam; a thousand perfumes were intermingled as an incense offering to the resplendent luminary; and a thousand rays seemed to glitter in every dew drop that decked the latest Autumn flower.

It would be well for many a troubled heart, if changes akin to those which so readily alter and beautify the face of nature, could also occur to drive away as quickly the clouds, the gloom, and the sorrow that have continued day after day, and year after year, to make certain human lives miserable; but there are, alas, some whose sky must ever remain thickly overcast with clouds, which even the brightest ray cannot penetrate or dispel. The sunlight

may fall with equal brilliancy upon the palace, the hovel, the prison, or the tomb; its refulgence may bring an increase of gladness to the joyful or to the thoughtless, but there are others around whom misery and its black train of servitors stand so thickly, and so closely, that neither sun, nor moon, nor star, nor hope can ever reach or enliven them more.

When John Valiant awoke from his troubled sleep, the bright scene from his chamber window was not so attractive or refreshing to his eye as it would have been to him but a single day previously. His dream of the past night had been as delusive as the pleasant day dreams in which he had been lately indulging for some time. Esther Meade was in his first thoughts when he arose; and the same ideas recurred that had but a few hours before so agitated him when he had reflected on what he had heard of her probable departure, and what he had imagined would be the result of her intended visit to London.

However, he now tried to rid himself of these obtrusive, disturbing notions; his philosophy came once more to his aid; he would make another effort to submit to what seemed inevitable; he would probably have to pass most of the day in her society—it might be the last opportunity he would have of spending so many hours in her company—and afterward, when she went away from Pendell, he would endeavor to forget that she existed, and to overcome the grievous disappointment as much as possible by redoubling his efforts in the generous enterprise to which he had for nearly two years devoted his energies and so much of his great wealth.

After he had left his friends the previous night, the conversation among those in the curate's parlor related principally to the wonderful change which had taken place upon the Heath since that property had come into the possession of its present munificent owner. As for the proprietor of the Mayston estate, no praise was considered too great. Charles Meade gave his father a short account of how he had become acquainted with Mr. Val-

iant in India, and of what he knew of him while in that country; and he told him that the natives of every caste looked upon John Valiant as being almost equal to a natural born Brahmin. As the subject of their conversation was now absent, Esther herself did not hesitate to express the high regard she had for a person so generally esteemed for his kindness of heart, and so eminent for his abilities and moral worth. She thought, however, that his skepticism in religious matters might perhaps be a great drawback to his influence.

“The only drawback,” said Charles Meade, “that can ever effect his influence may be that which might possibly arise from the jealousy or detraction of priests; but that can only happen in a religious community among whom he has no particular desire to enter—that is a simple notion of your own Esther. Some of the most distinguished men in England to-day, are outspoken disbelievers in all religion; and it must be admitted that prominently among the leading progressive minds of nearly every country, you will find learned, scientific, humane, and benevolent men who treat divine revelations of every kind, either Brahmin, or Christian, or Mohammedan, as complete myths. You have in England such as Spencer, Mill, Tyndall, Huxley, and Darwin; you have in Germany a thousand Humboldts; you have a new race of Voltaires in France; you have a Garibaldi in Italy, and a Castellar in Spain; and where is the land either in Europe or America among whose principal men—the leaders *par excellence*—are not to be found the most pronounced religious skeptics. It would not be difficult to prove, that the world is far more indebted for its present social, scientific, and political advancement to self-sacrificing individuals who disbelieve in theology, than it is to those who are almost continually wasting efforts and squandering money for the propagating of religious creeds; and if our good friend Valiant only consented to remain in England he would be the kind of missionary we want—even a needed missionary to bishops and priests themselves—he would liberate thousands of minds that

are now in the fetters of superstition; he would teach men the true nature of reason, and the true dignity of manhood, and he would no doubt be a leader in Parliament where the many obtuse and self-sufficient members of that body would probably be induced to unlearn many of their old foggy ideas concerning legislation and the true functions of good government."

Esther Meade looked up for a moment steadfastly at her brother. "Well do you think," said the curate, "that it is Mr. Valiant's intention ever to leave this country after all that he has been doing on the Heath?"

"I have reason to think so," replied Charles Meade. "It is just like what he would do if he thought he could be more serviceable elsewhere."

"And leave the Manor House after it has been restored?"

"Yes, I believe he would not hesitate a moment to leave it if it were necessary to do so in order to provide another refuge for the unfortunate."

Esther became nervous and restless, she had to place her hand over her eyes—the glare of the lamp light must have affected them.

"I cannot believe that he has any intention of leaving England," said the curate. "From what I could learn from him I understood that it was his intention to restore the old Manor House, and take up his abode in it."

"What! remain there all alone at this time of his life without a wife—with old Zingari perhaps as his house-keeper?"

"Oh, I know nothing about that," said the curate laughing. "If he should desire a wife he may probably be able to find one somewhere in England."

"The woman that is to be his wife," continued Charles Meade, emphatically, "is at present in India. I am confident of that."

A neuralgic pain must have darted through Esther's head, she pressed her hand to her forehead—she was seated close to her father and he noticed her suffering.

"It is nothing, nothing at all," said Esther with a forced smile in reply to his inquiry, "I often have a slight attack of this kind when I sit too long." She got up and went to arrange a few flowers which had been placed in a little vase in a corner of the room.

"I feel pretty certain of that," continued Charles Meade, scarcely noticing the short interruption, "for before I left Bombay I had it from a particular friend, that Mr. Valiant was engaged—yes actually engaged—to be married to a distant relative of his late wife—a wealthy lady—and that he was to return within a certain time to complete his espousal. See if he does not leave for India before this time next year."

At that moment the vase chanced to slip out of Esther's hands; it fell on the floor and was broken in pieces. "Well, well," said she slowly "how really awkward I am!" She stooped to pick up the few flowers and the fragments; she spent some time at this, and in trying to press some of the large pieces of the broken vase together; and when she stood up and turned to the light, she was smiling but her face was rather pale, and the curate at once recommended her to retire.

"Oh, never mind that," said he alluding to the broken vase. "You look rather wearied, child, and need some rest; you know we shall have to start at an early hour tomorrow for the Heath, and you ought to retire."

Esther placed the flowers and the fragments aside; she collected a few scattered sheets of music together, and in a few moments bid all good night; but when she got to her room, instead of seeking repose, she threw herself dejectedly into a chair; she had a strange feeling of despondency—a kind of sinking—she gave a few heavy sighs and then covered her face and wept.

Charles Meade, Ranee, and the curate still remained in the parlor. "Now," said Charles Meade resuming the conversation, and addressing his father, "speaking of marriage reminds me of the singular intimacy that has always existed between old Stephen Gray, and Sarah Afton

—something far beyond ordinary friendship. Years ago, before I left home for India, I remember well having been told that there was a kind of engagement between them; and that they were to be married some time. They are not relatives; for Stephen once told me so; they are not married, they still live apart just as they did years back; and now, on my return to Pendell, after a long absence, I find that this strange attachment still continues as strong as ever; it is most extraordinary. One would think that people at their time of life—for they are both very old—would be indifferent to any very tender feeling. When Ranee and I called at Sarah's cottage the other evening, old Stephen chanced to come in while we were there, and it was easy to perceive that there was something more than ordinary friendship between them."

The curate paused for a few moments before he replied: "The attachment to which you allude," said he, "had long been a subject of conversation in this parish, but time has detracted from its interest, and the matter is now scarcely mentioned. When I came here many years since, I saw that there was an understanding of some kind between Stephen and Sarah, but I was never sufficiently curious to inquire what it really was. They are two of the worthiest persons I ever knew, simple and harmless as children, but I fancy too much under the influence of superstitious notions concerning the interference of witches, or fairies, or unseen beings, in mortal affairs; and both of them are strong believers in spells, omens, and predictions, such a belief has, I fear, so far blighted their lives, and kept them as they are. During Esther's late illness, old Sarah spent most of her time with us. She and I had many a long talk about various matters of past days, and among other things I referred to the rumor that had once been common about herself and Stephen; and, after a little hesitation, she told me that a few years before I came to this parish she and Stephen had been engaged and were to have been married on a certain day; nearly every preparation had been made

for the nuptials. The first of May had been named for the ceremony, but an intimate friend had informed her, that that was an unlucky day for a marriage; besides it happened to fall on Friday, and that decided them to change it to the next day; and it was so fixed. However, it subsequently occurred to Sarah, that the second of May was the anniversary of her great-grandfather's murder at Pendell, and she would have the ceremony put off for another day, only she believed that it would be inauspicious to defer it more than once.

In the meantime Stephen had gone to see some of his relatives at a distance, and to purchase a ring. He was to have been back early on the second of May; but he did not return till evening, and brought the disconsolate news, that in coming through the church yard he had dropped the ring near the very spot where Sarah's great grandfather had been put to death, and that he had searched for hours without success. To lose the ring was, it seems, considered a most unlucky omen; besides on his way back to Pendell Stephen had observed a hare to run across the road, just in front of him—another bad sign. The marriage was at once put off. Were the marriage to take place under such circumstances, it would be followed, it was asserted, by dire misfortune. Sarah and Stephen felt that this unforeseen occurrence was a great affliction; but it was one which must be submitted to. Sarah had been assured by some wandering fortune teller who was then in the neighborhood, that Stephen and she would never be united until the ring was recovered; and that it would be useless to search for it at any other time but the second day of May.

For over forty years poor Stephen has made his annual search in the grave yard, but still the ring is missing; and although he insists that it is there still, yet it is most likely that it will never be seen again by the parties most concerned in its recovery."

"How very singular!" said Raneë, giving her husband a meaning look. "You know I am noted for being able

to find things which have been long lost. I have more than once dreamt of finding a ring in a cemetery; and since I have been in Pendell the very same dream has returned."

"If Stephen offers a reward it may be worth your while to make a search," replied Charles Meade laughing.

"Now that I remember," said the curate, "Sarah also told me that having much confidence in Zingari's ability to predict, she once called on her, but the old gypsy woman gave her but little encouragement; she merely told Sarah that the ring would never be found until a search was made for it by one who was yet in a foreign country."

"Then I had better try some time," said Ranee, "perhaps I shall be the lucky stranger."

"You must wait until the first of May next," said Charles Meade. "You know this is only the beginning of October."

"You must remember," said the curate jocosely, "that the search must be made on the second of May, not on the first."

"Oh, then," said Ranee in a sprightly manner, "I shall remember, and we shall have to come here from London on the second of May next to search for old Stephen's ring—and if I find it?"

"Then," said the curate, "there may be a golden wedding."

At an early hour they all started for the Heath. They had a carriage and a pair of horses furnished by Mr. Valiant, and lest the spirited animals should become restless he undertook to drive them himself. Did he wish to be alone?

Esther had had a restless night, but the clear pure morning air seemed to revive her, and her wonted cheerfulness almost returned. Her brother and Ranee indulged in sprightly conversation and quizzed her about the noble widower in London; they told her it was probable that she would soon ride in her own coach which would have an aristocratic coat of arms emblazoned on its panels.

She of course considered that it would be useless to appear annoyed by their remarks and she tried to submit to the infliction with the best grace she could, trusting that the unwelcome subject would soon be worn out. She had some hopes that Mr. Valiant could not hear what they were saying, but, as if fate would have it, every word which in any way related to her, reached his ears at once, even while the wheels rattled upon the hard road; but if Esther only knew the depressing effect that these words had upon his mind, she would have been the happiest person present.

The curate was the image of quiet contentment, he looked with a placid smile on each familiar spot as they went along, and he greeted with pleasant face those whom they chanced to pass upon the way.

What a change in the appearance of the once bleak, sterile, and inhospitable Heath. Every object that had disfigured the place had been removed. There were no tainted festering pools; no filthy taverns, such as the "Rook's Nest," or the "Bull Dog"; no squalid, brawling, ruffianly assemblage around them eager to indulge in strong drink, as a preparation for their Sunday revelry of blood. There were no polluted hovels in which destitution presided, or in which disease and vermin were bred to afflict the wretched occupants; no vicious, slatternly women moped about; and no half nude, hungry, and dejected looking children could be seen toiling as it were for death, or lying listlessly around, worn out by severe labor, as if anxiously awaiting their final release. What a happy change from this! what a cheering alteration in the aspect of the place, and in the condition of the people!

The carriage was stopped upon a little eminence overlooking a wide plain of verdure, they halted to gaze upon the picture of loveliness and rustic beauty spread out before them. The sunlight of the clear October day lent its mellowing glow to rural scenes, displaying here and there a pleasing contrast with the shadows. A hundred bleating sheep fed around; and numerous drowsy cattle rested

by the road side. Nearly a hundred cottages, white, or colored according to fancy, could be seen, many of which were almost covered with clustering vines. In front of every dwelling there was a piece of richly cultivated ground in which clumps of young trees were flourishing, and the flowers which still lingered among them, seemed desirous of sending their welcome of fragrance to the visitors. The sturdy ploughman's song, the wandering, school boy's whistling, the thrushes' soft notes, and even the hum of the spinning wheel, could be heard like the distant sound of mingled melodies.

About the centre of the plain there were several acres reserved as a park, around and through which a number of young trees and shrubs were thickly planted. Midway in the centre of this park there was a handsome fountain; and, at a short distance, there was a large, new building—not a church, but an edifice intended for an academy and a scientific institute. It had a spacious hall which could be used for public meetings, assemblies, lectures, musical and dramatic performances, or other intellectual recreations. There were two or three other buildings designed for public purposes; and it was evident that every arrangement on the Heath was carefully made for the benefit of the whole community.

Not a word was yet spoken, the visitors remained seated in the carriage, and were struck with admiration; even John Valiant seemed to regard the quiet scene with a new feeling of pleasure; and before he drove away from the spot he received the warm congratulations of his friends.

“You perceive a great change here,” said he, “but it is only such a change as might easily be made upon fifty other Heaths all over England, had your perverse priests, and their frenzied contributors, only sufficient discrimination to extend their ample missionary funds for the comfort and civilization of the thousands of the almost brutal and hungry heathen in Britain, instead of wasting their energies and their resources by ineffectual attempts to proselytize more enlightened, and better fed pagans in

distant lands. Side by side on that plain below us, you will find the natives of different countries living in peace together, they have been taught to overcome the foolish prejudice of nationality; and they will soon learn to speak one language common to all. You will find men whose minds were once dwarfed by religious dogmas, now expanding their ideas under the impulse of the nobler creed of humanity; and if you try to rid the world of its partial and erroneous conceptions respecting religion and nationality, you will soon get rid of the burden of priests and soldiers. Free the land from its bondage of monopoly and entail, and you will quickly limit pauperism and crime, and you will have fewer prisons and workhouses; and your costly churches instead of being pretentious fabrics for superstition and useless display will become useful at last as institutions of learning, or for other requisite public purposes; endeavor to secure these changes and you commence to clear the way for the general civilization of the world."

As Mr. Valiant did not wish that there should be any particular demonstration of welcome for himself or his friends upon their arrival he had previously sent word to Harry Tamblin his principal manager or overseer, to make a few simple preparations. Mr. Valiant had a neat cottage on the Heath which he humorously called the "Town House," and in which he also had his temporary office for the transaction of business. He and his son resided there together; he got a respectable old lady from London to keep house for him, and, altogether, he was very comfortable. His time, when on the Heath, was mostly spent in seeing that the improvements he was desirous of making were properly carried out, and in visiting and encouraging these whom he had induced to become actual settlers on the Plain; and he was careful to devote certain hours every day to the instruction of his son.

Harry Tamblin was present when they drove up to the large new building in the centre of the park. It was not yet quite finished, but Harry had got one of the rooms

neatly decorated, and a table was laid out and well covered with choice refreshments, sufficient to tempt the appetite. Before they sat down to the repast Mr. Valiant sent an invitation to Zingari to join them, but the messenger soon returned and informed them that she was absent, which was a cause of regret to them all.

After dinner they inspected the building. The hall was of large dimensions, and the other rooms most suitable for the purposes for which they had been designed. "This might be your church," said Mr. Valiant to the curate in a slightly reproachful tone, "but you would not accept my 'call.'"

"Well, never mind, my good friend," replied the curate in a soothing manner. "It might have been better that I had, but I shall turn pluralist for the time being, and have two parishes."

"And if you do," continued Mr. Valiant, "you must also have two creeds; you must leave your old creed at Pendell. Your parishioners here will require a far different gospel."

Other places were visited, and all were really delighted at what they had witnessed. Mr. Valiant, although very attentive, was noticed not to be in his usual high spirits. Esther observed this also, and she was struck by his unusual reserve towards herself. Most of the time he walked with Ranee, and showed her the principal share of his attention, and Miss Meade at once suspected that he was probably taking this opportunity of encouraging a private conversation about the lady in India to whom he was engaged. Esther's feelings at the moment were not to be envied, but the usual womanly resource was adopted, and she appeared not only to be quite indifferent, but made a great effort at gayety. This was perceived by Mr. Valiant and he in turn was led into the error of attributing this liveliness of manner on the part of Miss Meade to the pleasurable emotions which occurred to her when she thought of her intended visit to London.

Having visited different places on the Heath, and hav-

ing thoroughly satisfied his friends that his efforts to civilize the once infamous inhabitants of "Devil's Dale" were already a success, Mr. Valiant was anxious to have his visitors see the improvements made toward the restoration of the old Manor House. A pleasant drive brought them in view of the building. It was situated on an eminence and surrounded by large oaks, some of which had probably been planted by the founder of the original structure. The primitive stronghold—for almost every edifice of any importance in the days of villanage was considered a stronghold—must have exhibited an appearance of stern grandeur; parts of the ancient massive walls still covered with ivy, seemed to defy the hand of time, an old buttress could yet be seen half hidden under its load of dark green leaves; and a watch tower at the end of battlemented masonry, was still allowed to remain as a memorial of the disturbed feudal times in England when scarcely one ever doubted the propriety of the aphorism that, "Might makes Right." The restored part of the building was an approach to the Elizabethan style, and its simplicity was in marked contrast with the hoary exterior of the architecture of the early Norman times. A green sloping bank was in front of the Manor House, a wide terrace was below that, and at the north end of this plateau, as well as from the upper rooms in the mansion a fine view could be had through an opening between the intervening trees; and during a storm the roar of the ocean could be distinctly heard, and this, with the rush of the gale through the great extended branches and the knotted limbs of the old oaks, made tumult that would be alarming to many. Now, however, that the day was beautifully calm and clear, the scene was one of reposing grandeur. The visitors went through the various apartments, and up to the old watch tower from which an extensive and magnificent prospect could be had. They gazed for a time in silence at the glorious picture spread out before them. Esther was delighted and stated that she had never before seen anything so fine.

When they descended from the tower, Charles Meade and Ranee went off together to explore some secluded spot; and the curate, who remained with his daughter, addressed Mr. Valiant, and said: "Well, you were inclined to blame me for not taking up my abode on the Heath, but what shall I say to you for thinking to leave such a place as this?"

"Leave this place!" replied Mr. Valiant with some surprise.

"Yes," continued the curate, "I have been told that it is your intention to return to India before very long."

"Return to India," echoed Mr. Valiant with astonishment. "Well, my dear friend, you have been greatly misinformed, I never intend to leave England again. There," said he, pointing to the Manor House, "in that I expect to live the remainder of my life."

Esther Meade looked into John Valiant's face with an inquiring gaze. Is it possible, thought she, that I have understood him correctly? She told her father that she felt a little tired, and they went and sat together upon a rustic seat on the spacious lawn.

"I am indeed delighted to learn," said the curate, "that you intend to remain, and to have this from your own lips. Charles told me he had been informed that you were under a peculiar engagement to return to that country."

"An engagement! Did he say what the nature of it was?" inquired Mr. Valiant, still much surprised.

The curate paused before he ventured to reply; and Esther, though affecting to look around with indifference, was intensely interested in the conversation.

"Well, I really—really imagine—I think it was a—an engagement to be married to a lady in India." The curate spoke in a hesitating manner, as if afraid to commit himself in any way to what might be an unfounded rumor.

Mr. Valiant laughed aloud, the first and only hearty laugh he had given for a day or two, and the ringing sound of his voice, as it echoed under the great trees, per-

haps satisfied Esther more fully than if he had made the most solemn asseveration in contradiction of what her brother had stated.

"O, what in the name of heavens," exclaimed John Valiant, "could have put that into any one's head! I scarcely think Charles would have originated such a tale; the jest would be too transparent, but let me assure you, once for all, that there is no truth whatever in the story. There is no woman in India on whom my heart is set, and I fear," said he, lowering his voice almost to a whisper, "there is no lady in England whom I care for, that would be willing to link her fate with mine."

Before he had finished the sentence, he turned his look full upon Esther's face, as if the last words were intended for her ear alone; a blush of the deepest crimson overspread her countenance; and he, so capable of detecting the hidden cause of human emotions, and of understanding the genuine impulses of the human breast, saw at once through the depths of that very blush, that Esther's heart was still free; or rather, that it was his to win, even though the once envied Lord Wedmore, or the noblest suitor in England, were to approach her on bended knees.

The curate made no further remarks on the subject. Esther's heart beat wildly; and John Valiant, as if affected by such a sudden glimpse of hope and of heaven, became silent, and bent his eyes reflectively upon the moss-covered gnarled roots of one of the large trees before him.

While thus thinking, an apparition appeared. Zingari was seen at a distance, emerging from the thick shade of one of the most closely wooded recesses on the Manor. The curate got up at once, as if desirous of meeting her, but the old gypsy woman had already noticed him, and remained to await his approach. She sat upon the trunk of a fallen tree, and the curate and she continued together for some time, apparently in earnest conversation. Zingari frequently pointed to the Manor House, and then toward the place where John Valiant and Esther were

yet seated. What was said between these younger people under the shade of the great oaks, in the curate's absence, is unknown to any but themselves; however, when Zingari and the curate reached them, Esther still sat blushing, but John Valiant suddenly seized her hand, and as they both stood up, his eyes were filled with tears of joy when he asked the Rev. Mr. Meade, and his old gypsy friend, to sanction and to witness his betrothal.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SUNSHINE.

WITHIN three weeks from the time of her late excursion to the Heath, Esther Meade left Pendell to accompany her brother and Ranee on a visit to London; and much as she had desired to see more of the attractions of the great city, she now left her home with evident regret; indeed she would have remained, were it not for the urgent manner in which her father pressed her to go for a time.

Never had mortal found six months pass more drearily than John Valiant had during her absence. Six months without having seen Esther was to him an age of punishment. He had often been tempted to follow her to London, but he had refrained from doing so lest it should be considered an evidence of childish impulse. In his imagination the winter was interminably long, and lingering as if resolved that spring should never return. What a bleak period in his existence!

As a kind of solace he went to Pendell very often, he visited the curate frequently, seldom less than once a week, to inquire about Esther—she was never absent from his thoughts, and though he endeavored to apply himself diligently to the affairs of his little colony, yet the duty began to grow wearisome, and he fancied that every succeeding day presented a more gloomy appearance than the one which had preceded it.

The curate had, according to promise, gone to the Heath

regularly, and was greatly pleased to remark the increasing progress that was gradually taking place among the people of the plain. He spent much of his time with Mr. Valiant, and they often went together to the Manor House in which arrangements were being made for its permanent occupation.

The March winds came at last, they came unusually rough and wild, as if making a determined effort to rout the tardy Winter, and to sweep away every vestige of it. The boisterous forerunner of Spring seemed to take delight in raising mighty pyramids on the wide desert of the sea; in striding upon mountain billows, balancing great ships in its extended hands; in assailing lofty towers, and making them tremble; in rushing madly through the naked forest, tossing up clouds of withered leaves; and in making venerable oaks sway with laughter, and crack their sides at its gleeful turmoil; and then when the dark grey clouds had been blown far apart, and oases of blue sky appeared again, the reckless messenger grew wearied, lay down and slept.

Then came April with tearful, timorous look, lifting cautiously its azure veil as if to discover whether its dewy footsteps had awakened its blustering precursor; and as soon as it had shaken out its sunny ringlets, and scattered flowers around with a lavish hand to beautify the earth, then came Esther Meade back again like the sunlight to Pendell, to banish the winter from her father's home—and from John Valiant's heart.

Esther did not return alone, Ranee was with her.

Some great preparations had to be made, some household affairs had to be managed, and although much had already been done toward furnishing and fitting up the Manor House, Mr. Valiant wished to consult Ranee as to other matters in that relation which required her special attention.

During Esther's stay in London she had heard several of the most celebrated musicians; and more than one opportunity had been given her of satisfying the critical,

that her wonderful skill on the organ could not be excelled even in the great metropolis. She had reason to feel proud of this, and to be greatly flattered by the many compliments which had been paid her by several eminent persons. As for Lord Wedmore, his attentions were almost constant; he was certainly a person of distinguished abilities, of great good sense, and, for one in his position, no way assuming. His attachment to Miss Meade was sincere, and had become stronger every day, Raneë, and her brother, had noticed this particularly, and, as a duty to herself, it was with the greatest pain that she had been obliged to undeceive her noble suitor, to prostrate his hopes, to explain her position, and to refuse the offer of his hand: For Lord Wedmore she ever afterward entertained the highest regard; the greatest compliment that a man can pay a woman had been paid to her by him; and her grateful heart appreciated it accordingly. In the kindest possible manner she gave him to understand that they never could be any more than friends; and when she pressed his hand she said: "Remember, that as we cannot be anything else, we must always—yes, always be the very best of friends."

For some weeks rumor had been busy on the Heath regarding a certain happy event which was likely to take place; and there was but one opinion as to its beneficial result. John Valiant was beloved by the people whom he had benefited—in that lay his great power—and his kindness and benevolence were household themes; and no matter whom he might choose for a wife, they all felt confident that she must possess some inherent virtue to win his regard; and that consequently she would aid the good work which he had commenced.

From her childhood Esther Meade had endeared herself to almost every one, not only in her own parish, but to nearly every one on the Heath. She and her father, and her brother, could have gone to that place at all times with perfect immunity, even when it would not be safe for others to trespass beyond the boundaries of the

parishes. She used to visit the hated workhouse and distribute many little comforts to its poor inmates; and she was a regular visitant at the gypsy camp, and delighted to take little presents to gypsy children; and when she was a child herself, she was one of Zingari's most particular favorites. Her kindness to all was unbounded; and her unaffected modesty won the highest regard of her father's wealthy parishoners. No wonder then, that the rumor of John Valiant's intended marriage to Esther Meade should be well received, for it augured well for the continued prosperity of all on the Heath.

About the end of April, John Valiant in company with Ranee and the curate, went to the Manor House to see that every thing was complete. In its best day the place never looked more attractive. There were no armed men to be seen on the battlement; no eager look-out on the watch-tower; no prowling enemies in the vicinity. There was no wild trumpet echo in the distance; but the caroling of a thousand birds could be heard, as if the forest trees had become eloquent in praise of the genial season. One or two domestics could be now and then seen engaged in some particular duty, and an old gardener with his son, was busy pruning trees and trimming bushes; and the garden itself was a picture of loveliness. The profusion of young flowers, the little mountain of rock-work crowned with some rare exotic, the neat graveled walks with box-wood borders, the sparkling fountain, the clear running stream, and the long shadows that seemed slumbering on the green lawn, were surroundings that might have tempted the happy owner of the estate to fancy that this part of it was a suburb of Paradise.

Having spent an hour or more in a general survey of the house and the grounds, they went and seated themselves at the end of the terrace from which a fine view of the ocean could be had. Not a wave could be seen on the bright bosom of the deep, it was heaving gently, as if in calm repose succeeding its long and turbulent struggles with the wintry elements; as it now looked, one

might even fancy that it was a thing of life. An idea of this kind must have occurred to John Valiant respecting the placid sea on which he was gazing.

"I can scarcely wonder," he said, "that superstitious and imaginative men in remote ages believed that the ocean itself was a sort of Omnipotence, now wearied and slumbering, and now enraged and furrowed with frowning waves, as if prepared to sweep away the earth itself; and that they should also have deified celestial orbs, and even mountains and rivers. Imagination can easily endow inert objects with life; but it may be said that a whole universe of unorganized matter can not produce a single idea. The great sun is not conscious of its own existence. Its vast magnitude has no germ of thought. It knows nothing of the grand universe of which it is itself a part. Though it may rush through space with incredible swiftness, it knows nothing of the laws of motion; and though it may illuminate innumerable planets and satellites, it has no conception of the amazing rapidity with which its own light flashes from world to world. But Mind, that mystery, which can exist in an atom, and comprehend a law, and account for the motion of a thousand suns, can that be blotted out, and be regarded as the pure emanation of mere matter, which it is alleged cannot be annihilated? How difficult it is to decide the priority of matter or of spirit! Are they coeval? Is spirit but refined or greatly sublimated matter? Can mind itself be an entity? If it be but the mere emanation of matter, how wonderful that Mind should be the controlling power, and matter subservient! Who can decide?"

"These are problems," replied the curate, "which I often think are beyond human comprehension; their discussion is but based upon the merest speculation."

"And yet," resumed Mr. Valiant, "they continue to agitate thought among the learned, and, as theology is but a myth to thousands of the most intellectual, the question of the day seems to be to many: 'If a man die shall he live again?' If what the Spiritualists tell us be

true, then death is only the portal to a new and progressive state of existence. But we know that we exist at present, and in any case it is but wisdom to make the most of the life we have, by doing good, and endeavoring to establish truth; and if there be a future reward for good works all the better. Our highest duty in this life is, I consider, to try and promote the peace and happiness of our fellow creatures; in doing this we shall be almost certain of a commensurate reward here. I am, however, convinced that, so far, religious teaching has been an obstruction to true progress, and that it has wretchedly failed to secure either peace or contentment in this world—the only world that we really know any thing about, or of which we have any correct knowledge.”

The first of May was one of the most charming days that ever brightened the glorious scenery around Pendell. The blue sky was without a single cloud, there was not the slightest wind to ruffle the sea, and the white sails that were seen far out seemed like moss ngers that were in waiting to bear joyful news to every quarter of the globe. There was, this calm morning, no mist along the coast line; only the faintest shadow could be discovered on the side of the distant mountain, and the lighthouse towered up to its full height from its rocky basis, as if anxious to witness a ceremony which would probably be of more general local interest than any of the kind that had taken place in Pendell for over a century.

At an early hour people in their best attire, and with happy faces, were seen to assemble on the little lawn of the parsonage; a number of young persons could be noticed passing gaily onwards toward the church, and then there came a long procession of men, women and children from the Heath, the men bearing green boughs and the women and children carrying bunches of flowers, and all seemed to be delighted with the simple part they were prepared to take on the occasion that had brought them thus together. A glimpse of the gathering would scarcely reveal any thing more than flowers, smiles and sunlight.

And then the old church itself seemed to have lost its grey, grim appearance; it looked almost as worldly in its way as some new fashionable godly edifice specially erected for the stylish congregation of some highly popular preacher. The sheen of the sunlight that fell upon its walls hid the numerous fissures that time had been making, and gave a roseate tinge to its outlines, and at a short distance, the hanging ivy looked to be a vast wreath of glistening silver leaves. The storm battered old tower loomed up grandly in the clear air—proudly as it did in the past days of its hooded monks—wearing its shining garland, and its festooned glittering robe that flowed down to the ground.

The inner decorations of the edifice, were of the most tasteful and suitable description. A large number of the principal inhabitants of the parish, and many distinguished persons from a distance, had already taken possession of such pews and seats as could be found vacant. The building in every part was filled by young and old, eager to witness so interesting a ceremony, and when the bell rung at last, preparatory to the commencement of the service, many fancied that its tones had a sweet silvery sound far more musical than its usual intonation for the ordinary Sabbath service; as if a juvenile voice had replaced the hoarse accents of age.

While all were in a state of expectation, the curate, with a happy expression of countenance, entered and walked up the central passage to the altar railing, his boots, as if fate would have it, creaked louder than ever to his great discomfiture—the bride, the bridegroom, and the bridemaids followed; they passed between the people of the Heath, who had the privilege of standing in a long row on each side of the passage, and the green branches which they had were held up so as to form a kind of avenue. The curate was to officiate alone; he needed no assistant, and as soon as the ceremony was over, and the organ gave its last sound, Zingari, in peculiar attire, was seen to approach the bride and to place a wreath of beau-

tiful white roses over her neck, and offer her congratulations to the happy couple. A procession was then formed and when John Valiant and his bride got outside the church, a number of children stood in a circle around them and sung a few pretty verses composed by some rustic in honor of the newly wedded.

Upon their return to the Heath that evening, where there was to be great rejoicing, they all met in the large public hall which was finely decorated, and John Valiant made a short address to those assembled and said :

“ My good friends. It is about two years since I first saw most of you now before me, and many present will, no doubt, remember the sad scenes which I witnessed on my arrival, such as I trust will never be seen here again. I shall make no other reference to the circumstance, but you see how happily things have changed since that day. At that time the place was but an unproductive desert, morally, and physically, loathsome to the eye ; at that time it was not counted safe for a stranger to make his appearance among those who were then dwellers on the Heath. Most of you were counted a lawless, desperate set that would not hesitate to commit any atrocious act, and that were watched and despised, and almost forbidden to go beyond the dreary bounds of the then so-called ‘ Devil’s Dale.’ Now, however, you can go freely through any part of England ; and strangers come here, not with hesitation or dread, but readily to witness the reformation that has taken place in yourselves, and to look with surprise and admiration at the improvements which have been made ; this good has been accomplished steadily and without ostentation ; and the fact that you are known to come from the Heath, will now ensure for you the favorable consideration of persons even at a great distance from the once denounced locality. It has been my good fortune to have been able, in some degree, to bring about this happy condition of affairs. I could not have done so without your hearty co-operation ; and you have kept your promise, and have faithfully seconded my efforts to help

you. I have this day taken an important step to benefit my own condition, I am sure you all feel rejoiced at what I have done; and I feel equally happy to think, that she who has taken me 'for better or worse' will readily and cheerfully unite with me and with you in our further efforts to advance the prosperity of all upon this estate. And, now, that our circumstances have been so happily improved, and our future prospects so far brightened, let us never forget what we owe to others who have not yet been so fortunate. There are now thousands in this land solely depending for the barest necessities of life on the benevolence of the humane. The noblest duty in which man can be engaged is—not the blind worship of a deity—but, in making efforts to help the suffering, to relieve the distressed; and, above all, to liberate the mind from the bondage of priestcraft, for mental slavery is by far the most degrading. If there be a great Supreme Power, that power must be omnipotent, and needs not the pecuniary means, or the humble efforts of man, to bring others to a knowledge of his existence, to make the world submissive to his control, or to make his glory more transcendent; and the man who wishes to improve his own condition will fail to succeed, if while hoping or praying for divine aid, or expecting the same, he makes no vigorous effort to help himself."

Mr. Valiant having spent a few hours very pleasantly among his friends on the Heath, took his departure for the Manor House. He did not follow the usual fashion of starting off with his wife after marriage, and spending a week or a month among strangers; he left for his own home, and was escorted most of the way by a number of enthusiastic people. It was nearly sunset when they got in full view of the house, and its windows were all ablaze in the golden light, as if purposely illuminated; the red rays of eve were seen upon the tree tops, and upon the watch tower; and the beautiful day seemed to linger as if unwilling to depart and let its waning splendor be lost in night. At the end of the wide avenue of old oaks,

the carriage in which John Valiant and his wife were seated halted for a few minutes, his friends crowded around to take a kind leave, and when the vehicle drove on cheer after cheer was given, and the glad cheers still resounded until the happy wedded pair entered their own dwelling.

The next morning after Esther's marriage the curate began for the first time to realize the loss of his daughter, and though his son and Ranee had remained with him after Esther's departure, now that the pleasing excitement was over, he felt low spirited, and almost imagined that he would never see her again. Everything about the place reminded him of her who would make his house her home no longer. There was the chair in which year after year she had often sat sewing, or reading, or looking pensively out upon the lawn, or watching the setting sun. Ah me! What must have been her reflections many and many a time while sitting there alone! What must any woman's thoughts have been that felt herself, when approaching the age of thirty, almost neglected, and in a manner solely depending on an aged father for support or protection; and how sad and how lonely many a sensitive dutiful daughter must feel while thinking of the future under such circumstances.

Poor souls! Obligated to be mute, and to seem contented, while hiding from all—often even from the dearest friends—their bursting, yearning bosoms and almost broken hearts! Would that the condition of unmarried women, in our present state of society, could receive more just and tender consideration, for no human being can feel more terribly forlorn than she who is not loved. The secret sorrows of women who have never been wives, or who scarcely expect to be such, would furnish a woeful chapter in the history of human life.

However, the curate was really downcast; it was strange to him to feel so desponding about her who had so long been almost his only companion. Esther was away, she had left her old home, and he might have to leave it soon. He still loved the old place; he would like to remain in it

forever, and he would have willingly made a great sacrifice could Esther be restored to him again.

These reflections had already brought tears to his eyes. Ranee quickly noticed his depression, and tried to cheer him. She would have him go out with her and take a walk, it would have a good effect, and a ramble for an hour or two would help to cheer away his gloom.

They went out together, and sat on an elevated spot overlooking the Bay, and Ranee talked again about the shipwreck and about her fortunate escape. They went down to the shore and she picked up shells and curious seaweeds; they walked to the old church, the decorations were still there, but they reminded him of Esther's marriage, and the silent organ recalled to his memory the heavenly strains with which she had often filled the old sanctuary. They passed out and walked along the gravelled carriage road which ran across the grave yard, before they got to the end of this, they turned down a little pathway to read the inscription on one of the old tombs; they went to another, and then further on to see an ancient monument said to have been erected in memory of one of the original clerical founders of the church; it was in a dilapidated condition, and not a single letter could be discovered to give the least clue to the name, the age, the position or the virtues of the departed. Time had obliterated his name from the marble and his memory from mankind; his virtues or his evil deeds were totally forgotten.

While looking at this worn memorial Ranee chanced to see a little shining substance in one of the joints of the foundation stones just level with the ground; it was almost covered with a kind of thin dark green moss and imbedded in matter, or in a sort of cement, that had gradually accumulated and hardened during a long period. She tried to pick it out with her fingers, but had to use a small knife with some force to get it free. Presently she succeeded in jerking it out. A broken ring! It was in two pieces—nearly two equal halves. She picked them up.

The curate had wandered on a short distance, and was speaking to some person; she immediately recognized Stephen Gray. He was there as usual, just as he had been every second day of May for the last forty years, looking for the ring which Raneë now handed him in two pieces.

The curate was greatly surprised at the discovery, he remembered at once what Sarah Afton had told him concerning Zingari's assertion, that the ring would be found only by a stranger; and now that stranger proved to be Raneë.

Old Stephen seized the little pieces, and kissed them eagerly; he looked wistfully at the tiny treasure which he had been so long seeking, he sat upon a grave to gaze at the semi-circular fragments of gold, he rubbed them in his hands and tried to place the parts together; he was quite satisfied that they once formed the very ring he had lost; he seemed delighted at first, and expressed his joyful thanks to Raneë. But soon his countenance changed, and all at once a sad, a very sad expression marked his features. What an omen! A broken ring! Bad, bad for the finder, but worse, far worse for the owner! Alas, alas! poor old man, his long, long, cherished hopes seemed to have been utterly destroyed in a moment! and there he sat stooped upon the little mound, and wept.

For a time neither Raneë nor the curate understood the cause of poor Stephen's emotion; they thought at first that it might have been one of joy, but they soon discovered that his heart was filled with grief, and the tears ran down his furrowed cheeks, as if the pent up sorrow of years had suddenly burst forth and overflowed, to run on for ever.

When the cause had been told by Stephen, through his intermitting sobs, to the curate and Raneë, they did their best to convince him that his fears were groundless, and that he should attach no importance whatever to the accidental breaking of the ring; but all such reasoning was useless; poor Stephen still wept and sobbed, and sobbed and wept, as if his heart would break; and the

curate, feeling greatly affected by the sorrow of his old friend, tried to assure him again that he was very much mistaken in his singular fancy, that Sarah would in all probability take a different view of the matter, and perhaps regard the circumstance as an omen of good.

But it was of no use; Stephen only looked mournfully at the curved pieces in his open hand and said:

"Poor, poor lass! What a sad story I maun bring thee after thy long, long waiting! Poor lass! 'Tis no omen of good for thee, Sarah; thoo wilt soon say that. Thoo said'st it maun coom soom time afore death, and noo here it is bent an' broke an' will never gan aroond thy finger. It cam' just oot the toomb, an noo we maun only divide it, an each tak' the half on't doon to the grave. Poor Sarah! we maun noo wait till we get to that t'other shore!" The old man's tears now fell still faster as if they would never, never, cease.

The curate and Ranee stood by for some time and looked at Stephen with pitying eyes; never had they a stronger evidence of heartfelt grief; and as soon as they could prevail on the gentle old man to leave the place; they went together and accompanied him to Sarah Afton's cottage. As Stephen had anticipated, the sight of the broken ring was a dreadful omen to Sarah; she was overwhelmed with grief, and that sad second day of May was the last anniversary they lived to see of their once expected wedding day.

Nearly seven years have passed away since Esther Meade left her father's home to become the mistress of the Manor House. About a year after her marriage the curate went away with regret from the old parsonage at Pendell, to reside permanently with his daughter. He has been of great service on the Heath; and while instructing others, he has received new ideas himself, and, better than that, he has found sufficient courage and independence to express them openly. The greater part of his time, however, is spent at the Manor House. His little grandson John, now over five years of age, and his grand-daughter Esther

about two years younger, engage much of his attention; and he finds both pleasure and recreation in leading them from one pleasant spot to another. The Heath itself is vastly improved, and is now in the most flourishing condition; and its inhabitants are said to be among the most intelligent, orderly, and industrious body of people in England. It is still without a church, yet there is not a pauper on the estate; and rarely indeed has any person from that place been called upon to answer for an offence. Useful lectures are regularly delivered in the public hall, especially on Sundays; and an excellent band of trained musicians can be often heard. The Sabbath is not the sombre day it is in most other places; but a quiet day for rest, or recreation, according to individual desire. John Valiant is revered upon the Heath, and his wife is honored by all; and many ardent Christians, who were once fanatical, and missionary-mad, are already beginning to consider whether it would not be more prudent, and more profitable, to establish in many parts of Great Britain, such missions as the one that has proved so eminently successful in reclaiming the "Devil's Dale," rather than have vast sums sent out of the country in vain attempts to make the salvation of Laplanders, Feejees, or Hottentots, more certain.

Pendell is still under strict ecclesiastical rule as far as priestly livings are concerned, but the established creed has been considered sufficiently liberal for skeptical Christians since the Rev. Mr. Vanscourt has become the rector. A fashionable young curate—very sentimental in his way—reads a kind of moral sermon, fifteen minutes long, on Sundays, and consequently gives almost general satisfaction. The old church has been renovated, but the organ does not "draw" nearly so well since other fingers than Esther's have touched its keys. The old parsonage has been pulled down, and another built in more modern style; it has an extensive kitchen and a much more commodious dining-room than the old house had, and to which it is said the new bishop and many of his clergy often resort for mutual edification.

There is a new monument in the cemetery at Pendell, and a weeping angel in marble is seen pointing to an inscription which records in golden letters, the piety, the charity, and the virtue, of the late rector, Mr. Morton. At a distance there is another grave close to Adrian's, and Zingari rests at last by the side of her beloved. Sarah Afton has left her little cottage forever; and old Stephen Gray can no longer be seen slowly approaching it on quiet evenings, or afterward wandering in the twilight among familiar graves and tombs. His home is still within the limits of the consecrated ground, and he and Sarah rest beneath the same green covered mound; they have at last been united in death. One plain slab gives their names and their ages; and a well worn pathway leads to their silent retreat. Strangers visit the spot and the simple story of Stephen and Sarah has caused many a tear to bedew their grave; and now annually on the second day of May young men and maidens approach it reverently and cover it with early spring flowers; and for years yet to come it will attract many a sympathizing heart to ponder in the old church yard at Pendell.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I.

In several numbers of the *London Weekly Dispatch* there were accounts of the terrible condition of very young children who were obliged to work in rich yards of Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire in dirt and mud, from a very early hour in the morning until night; and that many of the little creatures were covered with sores and scabs; that they had matted hair, and bleeding feet; and that the labor was so constant, and so very severe, that they soon became broken down, and had to be sent to a work-house, where their subsequent treatment was most inhuman.

A report of the "Lancet Sanitary Commission," states, that the mismanagement (using a mild term,) of the Marland Workhouse, is most culpable. Medicines have been carelessly administered by paupers (pauper nurses). Forty children with cropped hair, sore heads, scabies, and reeking with sulphur and impurity, have been crowded into one small apartment, and dosed with brimstone, treacle, and cod-liver oil; that there were no play-grounds, but every thing calculated to make the lives of the poor little inmates most wretched and deplorable.

NOTE II.

A London correspondent of a leading Canadian paper writes, December, 1873:

"As it is, our papers have been filled with more than the usual complement of cases of distress and destitution. The master of a London workhouse has been sent to jail for refusing admission to a wretched woman with several children, and thereby causing the death from cold of a baby in arms. A relieving officer is now undergoing an enquiry into his conduct for refusing relief to another wretched, hard-working woman, unless she broke up her home and came into the workhouse. Cases like these make a noise: public benevolence is roused, the sufferers are provided for, and then public interest dies away. But to any one who knows anything of London, it is heart-breaking to think of the cases which are never heard of—the thousands who starve, pine, and sink and make no sign."

And then, referring to the increase of crime, says:

"Just at this Christmas time, too, we have had a sudden increase of violent crime. I should think for many years past there have not been so many felons lying under sentence of death, as there are now in our county jails. In the Winter circuit just concluded, there were so many capital sentences passed that there is certain to be a large number of reprieves. Yet each individual case is well nigh as bad as it could be. There is a sort of grim irony in the fact that just at this period the Church of England should have held a 'day of inter-

cession' for help to missionary enterprise. Yesterday throughout the United Kingdom special services were held in our churches, and prayers were offered up for God's grace to inspire our people to give more liberally to foreign missions for the conversion of the heathen to the doctrines of the Angelican Church. Surely there is work enough to be done in converting our own heathen at home before we look abroad."

Besides, the Church of England claimants 'for help to missionary enterprise,' there are several other denominations more determined and more fanatical, who would not hesitate to take the mite from a hungry widow for the conversion of the heathen. What madness!—

Author.

NOTE III.

PURRING IN LANCASHIRE.

A correspondent writes to the *Liverpool Courier*:—"Many of our readers probably do not understand the meaning of the word 'purr.' It does not mean the pleasant sound of poor pussy, as she nestles up to be stroked. No; it means the dextrous use of the foot, armed either with hob-nailed shoes or clogs; and this not for the purpose of walking quickly, nor walking a distance, but for the deliberate, scientific purpose of punching or kicking a man's eyes out, or causing his brains to protrude through the skull, or breaking his neck. As a rule, the men strip naked to the waist; they then face each other—sound in skin and bones—they try to get a grip of each other, as though wrestling, and twist their legs together so that one may fall; and should the top man be at liberty, backers then yell out, 'Na, tha hes him; go into him; purr his yed; good lad; that's warming him; purr him i' th' guts; eh, lads, but he's a good un.' Should the under man try to raise himself, then there bursts forth another yell, 'Na ow'd lad, wha'll tha hes hem da'an jump on him; kill th'——.' But should they fall together, and stick to each other, the chances are that one or the other will use his teeth and bite the other. And this is not the result of passion or momentary anger, but coolly and deliberately understood, or, as it is called, 'made.' Very often women and children are eye witnesses, and thus the children are taught from infancy how to use their feet; not to walk, or to run, for health's sake, but to maim each other, to deform themselves, to utterly disfigure the image of humanity—that which should be an index to love and kindness—and to such perfection do the children learn the 'science,' that utterly regardless of the Fifth Commandment, they will exhibit their skill on the shins of their mothers if they are not allowed to act precisely as they like. The foregoing is what may be termed the practical part of the 'science.' Not very long ago, in open day, in the borough in which I live, two men 'purred' each other; one, with a scientific cut with his foot, kicked the other's eye out, and it lay on his cheek. It is needless to go on giving examples, for your columns are continually telling of these brutal exhibitions. Yet I cannot resist mentioning a circumstance which occurred in a field, some years ago, near my residence. Some friends had been to a funeral, and, after committing their relative to the grave, were returning home the worse for drink, and got to words. Hearing a noise, I went out to see what was the matter, and there were these

friends standing round, not the grave of their deceased friend, but round two of their living companions, who were 'purring' into each other's carcasses, the sound of which resembled the knocking in an empty barrel end. It was weeks before I got rid of the 'queer' sensation I felt that night."

NOTE IV.

The Rev. Dr. Duff's testimony respecting the want of success among Christian missionaries in India was given by him at a meeting of the Free Church Assembly in Edinburgh, in 1869. He said: "If you were to ask me one of the chiefest causes of the slow progress of genuine Evangelical Christianity in India, and other heathen lands where the matter has come athwart me, I would have no hesitation whatever in proclaiming (and I wish I had a throat of brass and a tongue like a trumpet to proclaim it through every corner of the British Empire.) that one of the chiefest causes is to be found in the miserable distractions and divisions of the Christian Church in this land. The Duke of Somerset relates the manner in which a Chinese Mandarin was puzzled by having two kinds of Christianity presented to him, Papist and Protestant. In India we have the representatives of some *twenty-five* different missionary societies differing more or less in policy, organization or discipline, and partially in doctrine. You cannot go any where in India without having this at once cast up. They ask, 'To which Church do you belong?' and when you tell them, they may add, 'Oh! there are so many so-called Christian bodies beside you. How are we to understand which of you are right? Go and settle your differences among yourselves and then come to us.'"

Notwithstanding this disunion still continues, the Mohammedans are far more successful with the natives than Christian missionaries have been, and nothing that St. Paul or Dr. Duff could say would reconcile the *Kirk* and the *Free Church*, or overcome the fierce hostility of other sects.

A missionary in conversation with a correspondent of the *London Times* stated that with regard to the conversion of the Bengalese: "It is all dark; the old saying is true, when a man has been five years in India he thinks he comprehends them; when he has been ten, he begins to doubt that he does so; when he has been twenty, he is quite certain he does not comprehend them at all." And yet Bengal is permeated with English thought and English literature. Many of the educated natives think in English, not in their native tongue. But they are not becoming Christian. The missionary conference ought to throw light on many subjects, and will do so, if the speakers will try to forget the London committees and the May meetings. There are some missionaries in India who are strengthening British rule and good government; there are some who are doing the reverse.

NOTE V.

A FIGHTING PARSON.

At the Petty Sessions held at Brackley, Northamptonshire, recently, before Messrs. R. A. Cartwright, J. L. Stratton, and Sir W. R. Brown, the Rev. B. Robson, curate of Chacombe, and Henry Chinner, laborer, were charged with committing a breach of the peace at Chacombe,

on Sunday, September 22. The Rev. B. Robson denied the offence. Chinner said he only stood in his own defense. William Heritage, a laborer living at Chacombe, said on Sept. 22d the Rev. R. Robson came out of the church through the churchyard into the highway. When he had got a few yards before the people he turned around and went up to Chinner with his arm up, and asked him if his name was Chinner. Robson doubled his fists and stopped Chinner. They went down the road together a short distance, and then Robson took off his hat and coat and swore he would fight Chinner. The latter pulled off his coat but said he did not mean fighting. Robson struck Chinner twice before Chinner struck him at all, and then they had a regular round. There were several people present at the time. They had one round, and then Chinner knocked Robson nearly down. Robson picked up some stones, but Chinner looked threateningly at him, and Robson went up to him and said: "Let's shake hands and then settle it; you have got me into trouble enough." John Adkins, also living at Chacombe, said he saw both defendants strip to fight, and also saw them fight. Mr. Robson declined to say anything in defense.

Chinner said he was going to church, but when he got to the gates he met the people coming out, and they told him there would be no service. Robson came through the people, and when he had gone some distance turned to him and said: "Come up in the field." He (Chinner) replied, "No that won't do; it is Sunday." Robson said, "It is all the better for that," and took off his hat and coat and struck him. He (Chinner) only struck Robson in his own defense. The Chairman, addressing Mr. Robson, said they were pained to see him in his present position. It was a scandal to the Church, and they hoped that the ecclesiastical law would have prevented the case coming before them. If Chinner had not struck Mr. Robson in his own defense, he (Mr. Robson) could have been summoned for an assault, and might have been sent to jail for two months without the option of a fine. They (the magistrates) treated him as an ordinary defendant, and should bind him over to keep the peace for six months in £20, and Chinner in £10. The defendants must also pay the costs 36s. The Chairman added that he hoped the vicar would take notice of the case, and save the Church from public scandal.—*English Paper*. 1872.

NOTE VI.

It cannot be doubted that there are many clergymen in the State Church who may be classed as skeptical as Mr. Vanscourt; it is very probable that there are some such in almost every denomination who, like Colenso, Voysey, and others, still remain and preach, although disbelieving in the "Divine revelations" of Christianity. There are others, however, who leave the clerical ranks as quickly as they discover that they have been in error. Many years ago the Rev. Robert Taylor, A. B., curate of Midhurst, England, became an unbeliever and wrote the "*Syntagma*," the "*Diegesis*," and many other powerful works against Christianity; later still we have Colenso's writings, the *Essays and Reviews*, and other publications reflecting on the popular faith; and when persons so eminent as the Rev. Mr. Clark leave the Christian Church, it is likely that we may have further reasons given for the prevailing unbelief among so many of the

learned and intellectual; he has evidently made no slight sacrifice out of conscientious regard for what he considered truth.

THE REV. MR. W. G. CLARK'S RENUNCIATION OF HOLY ORDERS.—The renunciation of holy orders by Mr. W. G. Clark, Vice-Master of Trinity College, and late Public Orator at Cambridge, a man of high reputation in literature, is felt to be a very serious matter by all classes of Churchmen. He has long been known to entertain some opinions in common with Bishop Colenso and the school represented by the writers of "Essays and Reviews." He does not believe in the infallibility of the Scriptures, rejecting parts of them as of doubtful authenticity, and finding in others questionable teaching in theology and morals. At his ordination he was asked whether he unfeignedly believed all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and he answered, Yes. But he no longer believes them, and moreover he cannot stand up in the face of the congregation to say, "'God spake these words,' when 'he is convinced He did not speak them.'" Certain newspapers are trying to convince Mr. Clark that he has done very foolishly, because the courts have decided to interpret the Articles with a good deal of latitude. In this and other matters we are told that the legal must be the measure of the moral obligation. This is affirmed to be the understanding with which the Thirty-nine Articles are always signed now at the Universities. Think of what this means. The young clergy—the future teachers of religion and morality—are being brought up to proclaim by their example, if not by their lips, that everything is lawful for which a man cannot be put in prison and convicted at the bar of a criminal court! Behold, then, the millennium of dexterous swindlers and clever cheats! It is to be hoped that the consciences of many another Broad Churchman will be pricked by the serious declarations of Mr. Clark into following his example. While they are known to equivocate Sunday by Sunday at the altar, they are the most serious offenders against honesty in the nation, and doing most to sap the foundations of all religion.—*English Independent*.

With reference to skeptical clergymen. Bishop Colenso says: "I assert, however, without fear of contradiction, that there are multitudes now of the more intelligent clergy, who do not believe in the Noachian deluge as described in the book of Genesis. Yet did ever a layman hear his clergyman speak out distinctly what he thought, and say plainly from the pulpit what he believed, on this point? Did ever a doctor or a bishop of the Church do this—at least in the present day? I doubt not that some cases may be found where such plainness of speech has been exercised. But I appeal to the laity generally with confidence. Have you ever heard your minister—able, earnest, excellent as you know him to be—speak out plain to the people what he knew himself about these things? Or, if not to the congregation at large—for fear the ignorant and unlearned should wrest it to their own destruction—has he ever told these things to you in private? . . . Have not the clergy kept back from you their thoughts hitherto, not only about the deluge, but about a multitude of other matters, such as those treated of in Part I of this book—which, as my adverse reviewers say almost with one voice, have been all along perfectly familiar to all respectable students of divinity." (*Preface p. p. 28, 29.*)

How, in fact, can it be possible a clergyman should venture to think on these subjects, when by so doing, he is almost sure to come to doubt or disbelieve some portion, at least, as we have seen above of the Church's doctrine, and then he may feel bound to follow his own sense of duty, if it accords with the sentiments expressed by the Bishop of London, and abandon voluntarily the ministry of the Church, deprived of all share in its duties and emoluments, yet burdened still with the necessity, according to the present state of the law, and dragging about him for his whole life-long his clerical title and its legal disqualification for engaging in any other duties of active life." (p. 29.)

"Should, however, his views of duty not compel him to make this sacrifice, still how can a clergyman be expected to indulge in free thought on some of the most interesting and important questions of physical, historical, and critical science, when he knows that, for arriving at any conclusion on certain points of Biblical criticism which contradict the notions of our forefathers, living in days of comparative darkness and ignorance of all scientific research, he may be dragged into the Court of Arches, and there by legality be forcibly ejected, or if not ejected, at least suspended from his living, and saddled for life with a crushing weight of debt, at the instance it may be of some good, easy brother, who never perhaps knew what it was to have a passionate yearning for truth, who never made a sacrifice for truth, as truth, who never made a sacrifice in the search, or for the maintenance of it, and never in fact gave himself an hour's hard thinking in all his life. What clergyman I repeat, with a wife and children to support, can afford to give himself to the simple straight-forward search after truth—much less to the honest utterance of it—at the cost of £9000." (Ibid. p. 30.)

NOTE VII.

THE CURE OF SOULS BY PURCHASE.

(*From an Investigating Contributor for the London Daily News.*)

I have learnt more as to the current value of advowsons and presentations in the last hour than I am likely to forget; and am at this moment sorely puzzled between the advantages proffered me by these two forms of investment. It's my way, when I want information, to go straight to the fountain head, so directly I'd sanctioned my youngest daughter's engagement with Meekskip, our curate, I just put myself in the train and came up to London to consult a clerical agent as to the best thing to be done. My objections to the match are beside the question, so I'd pass them by; though why on earth a sensible girl with a comfortable home should puke and pine because she was forbidden to think of a man who was no more able to keep her in the way she's been brought up than I am to feed my pigs on pineapple cream, is beyond me altogether. However, it's done, and there's nothing left but to make the best of it. Meekskip hasn't a penny, of course. His father was a parson before him, his widowed mother has three unmarried daughters and this son, and the lad could have never been sent to college if he hadn't been clever and plucky, and so won an Exhibition. My daughter has £1,500 in her own right; and when I consulted my lawyer, old Biber—a good man but of the old school, and with a conveyancing practice chiefly—all he could advise

was that I should have all Madge's money tied up as tightly as possible, ordering it to be put into the funds, and preventing the trustees, so far as I was able, changing the form of investment for Indian railways or other spacious ways of getting five per cent. This would have given the young couple about £60 a year, or less; or with the other £1,500, which I shall in this case find for my daughter on her wedding-day, some £120 a year. It was to see if something better couldn't be done with the money in church property, and I have been talking to the clerical agent this morning. I found him as pleasant and business-like a little gentleman as one could wish to meet. The first-floor of a London house, the ground-floor of which is occupied by a shop—this is where I found my agent. A deaf clergyman in what used to be called a Puseyite-waistcoat, a white tie, and coat and trousers of appropriate color and cut, cannons against me as I reach the door. "I want to see Mr. Blank." (the agent,) He remarks to me interrogatively and apologetically, though not hearing well he had turned round and trodden on my toes. He put his hand to his ear to catch my reply, so I shouted, "The very thing I've come here myself to do!" where upon a door opened, and we were both invited to enter. Not into the presence of the agent, but into a counting-house, in which several clerks were busy upon ledgers and journals; and where printed bills of the livings on sale hung from the walls, exactly as other bills hang at the Auction Mart or Garraway's. The chamber is divided by a wooden partition, behind which the clerks are busy as I have said, while the remainder is used as a waiting-room. We both send in our names to the agent, who is in an adjoining room, the clergyman, with great skill, handing in his name before mine to ensure a priority, though we really came in together; after which we take our seats and look about us. "Curacy Department" is printed in large black letters on one side of the wooden division, then comes a door marked "Private," and then the words, "Exchange Department." The agent's engagement does not last long, and while the deaf clergyman is with him I ask for a printed list of the livings which are in the market now. A pamphlet consisting of thirty-five closely printed pages is handed me, and I proceed to con this over. The study becomes so fascinating that I fervently hope the deaf clergyman may have difficulty in persuading the agent he is not disqualified by his infirmity for the cure of souls, and that his interview may be prolonged. "Population only 100, neighborhood noted for its extreme salubrity, income about £120 a year, price of presentation £500." This is an epitome of the first entry in my pamphlet; but there is no rectory-house, and the whole thing doesn't seem quite good enough for the man who is to marry my daughter. I fix upon £3,000 as my limit, so that the next is far beyond me, being 5,500 guineas, and yielding a net income, "chiefly from glebe," of £650 a year. But it would weary you if I were to go through the advertisements one by one, or to attempt to describe the anxious care with which for Madge's sake, I compared one with another. I had to balance such things as "population 3000, coach-house, stable, harness-room, loose-box, large walled garden, conservatory, and good supply of water," against such tempting explanatory foot-notes as "this preferment was purchased by one of the Colleges for a Fellow some eight years since, and now it is being sold at the same price, allowing

simply for the expenses of conveyance, as was given for it at that time, when the incumbent (now 78) was only seventy years old." "No poor" was a recommendation in one case: "single duty" in several. "Immediate possession," and "there is every prospect of immediate possession, incumbent being 71 years of age and very infirm," were added as riders in others. "The incumbent is 52 or 53 years of age, but his life is a bad one, was a statement which gave the rectory-house "not in good repair" gloomy associations, and made me turn with a sigh of relief to the next page, where "the neighborhood offers very good society, with plenty of fishing, hunting," etc., combined with the assurance of "no chapel," seemed much more eligible—though for that matter Meekskip, poor fellow, is no sportsman, and would, I fancy, rather like a chapel to convert.

I had read thus far, when the door opened and a head popped in. "Has a deaf clergyman come here?" its owner asked. "Yes," answered a clerk laconically. "Is he with Mr. Blank?" "Yes." "All right; only wanted to know," and the head disappeared—as I thought chuckling at the prospect of commission. A lanky young man in a straw hat, shooting jacket, and patent leather shoes—a young man who looked far more like boating than preaching—sauntered in leisurely and asked for the agent. He was engaged, and this gentleman (myself) was waiting; was it anything the clerk could attend to? It was about a curacy; London and a good part of London essential. The vacancy at Chelsea required explanation. "What sort of people lived in Chelsea; was Chelsea part of Belgravia; were the dwellers in it of the upper classes?" It was the clerk's opinion that Chelsea was the favorite 'district for what he would term the middle upper class of church-goers, which he specified, to prevent the possibility of mistake, as "professionals, artisans, tradesmen, and that class."

I was beckoned for at this juncture; the deaf clergyman had departed by another door, and I found myself face to face with the clerical agent. My first feeling was one of gratitude to him for not having made himself up like a clergyman; and for being so straightforward and business-like. A brisk, fair gentleman with a prepossessing manner—that's what the agent is. He is well dressed and well jewelled, and carries a single-stone diamond and a full sized blood-stone signet ring on the same hand. My first thought is that I once met a swell stock-broker very like him; my second that he belongs to the race which Mr. Disraeli maintains furnish the master-spirits of the world. "Not being a parson," I begin with a smile, "I'll explain my business in two minutes"—which I do. I learn directly what £3,000 will buy. If I want the money to be settled on my girl I can have an advowson of £250 a year for Meekskip, with a house, only I mustn't ask for any of the home counties—Kent or Essex for example—they're more, naturally. If, on the other hand, I'll be satisfied with buying a presentation, or, in other words, a living for Meekskip which will terminate with his life, why I can get £400 a year. This is the outside value, the agent warns me, and the income will be rather less than more, but I need not trouble myself about the young people having to wait in either case if I once resolve upon the investment. "The great object of the owners of church property," my friend adds pleasantly, "is to get as much for it as possible, and you'll find that after you've deducted £100 or £120 a year for your friend's services

you'll have in addition to a residence, about five per cent. for your money if you buy an advowson, and from seven to eight per cent. if you buy a presentation. An advowson is freehold, and can be settled on the lady and the offspring of the marriage—that is, can be invested in the names of trustees and be sold for their benefit on Mr. Meekskip's death. A presentation will give you a better rate of interest, even after you've deducted a reasonable sum for the clergyman's annual premiums for life assurance; but then, you see, you can't compel him to keep his payments up; so for absolute security for the wife there's nothing like an advowson." "Doesn't the price of a presentation depend upon the present holder's age?" I asked, for I didn't see the fun of negotiating for something which would keep the young people waiting and inflict upon us all the nuisance of a long engagement. "Far less than you'd suppose," was the urbane reply: "besides, in any presentation you bought, sir, I'd arrange for immediate possession." "How could that be managed?" "Quite easily—in fact, the commonest thing in the world. The present holder resigns. You place the money in your solicitor's hands. Your solicitor sees the vendor's solicitor, and if the resignation doesn't take place, why the cash is not parted with. I've a pretty little place here (hands me a photograph of rectory, upon which I notice there is a tolerable stock of such photographs on mantelpiece and desk), but it's rather beyond your figure. It has a nice church too, in capital repair, (hands me a photograph of church)—perhaps if you could make it guineas we could effect the purchase." I ask about the incidental expenses connected with the transfer of this kind of property; and find it to be usual for the vendor to pay the agent's charges, so that the lawyer's bill ("about £30 or £40, according to circumstances") is all that will fall upon me. I've learnt almost as much as I want to know by this time, and the agent and myself shake hands with each other, mutually pleased. I promising at his request "to refer to this interview when I write." I brought the book with the list of advowsons and presentation "in stock" away with me; and Madge, Meekskip, and myself shall have many a good pore over it, I promise you, before deciding. Old Biber wanted to make me believe before I came up that buying or selling church preferment is Simony, and that Simony is a crime; but I flatter myself I return fully able to convince him of the absolute absurdity of his views. This copious printed list of livings on hand; the number of respectable applicants (I have omitted half-a-dozen interruptions in our interview, from cards being sent in, people waiting, and so forth) who were waiting; and the unmistakably air of prosperous and extensive business which environs the clerical agent's place—all put Simony out of the question. I shall buy my future son-in-law an advowson (freehold), just as I shall buy my daughter her trousseau, and having once got it, paid for it, and settled it, shall have the satisfaction of knowing it to be as permanent provision as if the money were in the funds while Meekskip's social position as rector will be far better than as a poor curate who can't preach, with a small additional income from his wife.

NOTE VIII.

The Protestant religion is now freely tolerated in the City of Rome, though contrary to the expressed desire of the "Holy Father;" and

Spain, notwithstanding the fierce protests of the priest-party has also become Liberal. The following statement will, however, show what difficulties liberal statesmen have had to encounter: Col. Fitch, an English resident in Spain, had long but vainly tried to obtain permission to erect a Protestant church in that country. During the reign of Queen Isabella, the priests being all powerful, such an application from a heretic was treated with contempt; but after the Queen had abdicated, a member of the new Government issued an authorization dated Nov. 9, 1868. "The minister of Grace and Justice has duly considered your petition to erect a Protestant temple in this Capitol, and has seen fit to authorize it. You can now proceed with its construction in such manner as shall conform to the municipal ordinances."

One would think that such a concession ought not to excite the hostility of any reasonable person, but the ultra-Catholic papers seemed to grow frantic over the permission. The "*Regeneracion*" thundered out: "No man ever committed such an outrage on the Spanish people as Romereo Orteiz, the minister who granted it. Since Spain existed such a disgraceful and suicidal act was never committed. We say it, but not hypocritically, we shall make special prayer to God for the salvation of the soul of this degenerated man." Poor Orteiz!

NOTE IX.

A MISSIONARY'S HARDSHIPS AND SUFFERINGS.

A large majority of the impulsive Christians who give so freely and so liberally to the mission fund, are no doubt under the impression that a missionary's life is one of great hardship and danger. Madame Ida Pfeiffer, the great traveler, was of the same opinion until she visited missionary stations in India, and she writes as follows: "In my opinion the missionaries were almost if not complete martyrs, and I thought that they were so absorbed with zeal and desire to convert the heathen that, like the disciples of Christ, quite forgetting their comforts and necessities, they dwelt with them under one roof, and ate from one dish, &c. Alas! these were pictures and representations which I had gathered out of books; in reality the case was very different. They lead the same kind of life as the wealthy; they have handsome dwellings, which are fitted up with luxurious furniture, and every convenience. They recline upon easy divans, while their wives preside at the tea-table, and the children attack the cakes and sweetmeats heartily; indeed their position is pleasanter and freer from care than that of most people; their occupation is not very laborious, and their income is certain whatever may be the national or political condition of their country." . . . "Many of the missionaries believe that they might effect a great deal by preaching and issuing religious tracts in the native language in the towns and villages. They give the most attractive report of the multitudes of people who crowd to hear their preaching and receive their tracts, and it might reasonably be thought that, according to their representations, at least half of their hearers would become converts to Christianity; but unfortunately the listening and receiving tracts is as good as no proof at all. Would not Chinese, Indian, or Persian priests have just as great troops of hearers if they appeared in their respective national costume in England or France and preached in

the language of those countries? Would not people flock around them? Would they not receive the tracts given out gratis even if they could not read them?

I have made the minutest inquiries in all places respecting the results of missions, and have always heard that a baptism is one of the greatest rarities. The few Christians in India who here and there form villages of twenty or thirty families, have resulted principally from orphan children who had been adopted and brought up by the missionaries; but even these require to be supplied with work, and comfortably attended to, in order to prevent them from falling back into their superstitions."

Alluding to the manner in which missionaries travel about to spread the Gospel, she says: "At the same time, it must be remembered that the journeys are not made in a very simple manner: as mine has been for instance; the missionaries surrounds himself with numerous conveniences; he has palanquins carried by men, pack-horses, or camels, with tents, beds, culinary and table utensils; servants and maids in sufficient number. And who pays for all this? Frequently poor credulous souls in Europe and North America, who often deny themselves the necessities of life that their little savings may be squandered in this way in distant parts of the world." — *A Woman's Journey Around the World.*

NOTE X.

THE MORTARA CASE.

Many will no doubt remember that in the year 1858, one of the most unjust and fanatical acts ever perpetrated by the Church of Rome, took place in the city of Bologna, Italy. On the 23d of June, in that year, a respectable Jew of that city, Signor Monolo Mortara, a manufacturer and wholesale merchant of cloth, upon returning home about ten o'clock at night, found that Padre Felletti, inquisitor-in-chief at Bologna, had sent a number of policemen to carry off his son Edgar, a mere child, who, it was said, had been surreptitiously baptized a Christian by a bigoted Roman Catholic servant-maid. The parents of the boy were of course greatly surprised and afflicted, and entreated that he should not be then taken away, in order that the archbishop of Bologna might in the mean time be appealed to; but as he was absent, little further delay was granted, and the next evening a number of papal soldiers entered the house and "tore the child out of his father's arms." The boy was then taken to Rome and immured in a convent. Cardinal Antonelli, and other Roman Catholic dignitaries had been appealed to by the parents with little or no effect, for it was said, that as the child had received Christian baptism—even though by the hands of a common servant-maid—the church could not consent that the boy should be returned to the perilous charge of unbelieving parents. The parents as well as the boy himself pleaded that he should be allowed to return to his own home, but all entreaties were in vain, neither the archbishop of Bologna, nor Cardinal Antonelli, nor the Pope himself, would consent that he should be given up; and this case of oppression caused such excitement at the time in Europe, that the indignation in England was intense, and protests from the Evangelical Alliance, from the archbishop of Canterbury and many other bishops; from peers and members of Parlia-

ment, from Jews, and from other classes were forwarded against the outrage.

Well, if such an outrage was raised against the Roman Church for its sanction of such tyranny, what shall be said in denunciation of a similiar atrocity on the part of Protestants? The British law, to be sure, quickly brought redress; but priestly infatuation and duplicity was much the same in one case as in the other. The following account from an English paper describes what had been called the "Baptist Mortara Case," and proves how men, and even women—under the impression that they are doing what is right—can be betrayed into the commission of the most heartless acts, too often the consequences of their minds having been debauched by superstitions.

THE LYONS CASE.—A very extraordinary case has been tried lately before Mr. Baron Chanell, at the Cardiff assizes. It was the subject of a good deal of talk some months ago. It was alleged that a Jewish girl, named Esther Lyons, had been surreptitiously converted to Christianity by the wife of a Baptist minister named Thomas, and then induced by the same lady to leave her father's house and remain away from it. What was certain about the case was that the girl had become a Christian, that she was away from her father's house, and that she declined to return to it. How far Mrs. Thomas and her husband (who was supposed to be involved in the affair) were guilty has always been a matter of dispute. The whole case is now, however, undergoing a full investigation before a jury, the father of Miss Lyons having brought an action against the Rev. Nathaniel Thomas and Louisa Ann Emily Thomas, his wife, and various other persons. The trial (which began on Monday) appears to be exciting enormous interest throughout South Wales. The court is crowded daily, and the local papers say that it is very difficult to gain admission. Ladies especially are present in great numbers. On Tuesday morning the heroine of the case was brought into court by the clerk to the defendants' attorney. As soon as the young lady was seated, and was observed by her mother, the latter began to cry out, "Esther, my dear Esther, come and sit by your mother." The entreaty was allowed to pass unnoticed by the child, who warmly shook hands with those ladies—her "dear friends" as she calls them in one of her letters—by whom she was surrounded. It was distressing (says the local reporter) to listen to the mother's appeal, and the judge suggested that she had better be removed from the court and accomodated with a seat in one of the rooms. At last the poor woman fainted, and she was then taken out. Mr. Barrett Lyons, the plaintiff, gave evidence at great length. He detailed how his daughter left him on the 23d of March last year, and how he went to the house of the Rev. Mr. Thomas to seek her. Mr. Thomas assured him he did not know where the young lady was, and he subsequently saw Mrs. Thomas, who admitted that Esther had slept one night in her house, but would not give any further information. So, after being asked by the lady (who said she had been praying for his family's conversion for three weeks) to accept a little book, he took his leave. That day or the next he met Mr. Thomas, who, in reply to the questions about his daughter, said: "I don't know; you will hear of her. Wherever she is, she is safe." An arrangement was at length come to, that Mr. Lyons should see his daughter on certain conditions, but he was to pay down a sum of

£10. He offered Mr. Thomas a cheque for that sum, but he would not take it, and it then appeared that Miss Lyons had refused the interview. She did see her father, however, in a lawyer's office in London and positively refused to go back. The cross-examination of Mr. Lyons and of his wife (who was subsequently called) was directed to show that they had systematically ill-treated their daughter. This they positively denied. On Wednesday the defendant's counsel protested against the intimidation of Miss Lyons by her whole family being brought into court, and by the conduct of the Jewesses present, which, the reporter says, turned the court into a Jewish "place of wailing." Mrs. Lyons was examined, and denied that she had ever ill-used her daughter, but Esther herself spoke of a number of specific acts of cruelty. Before her evidence was over, she fainted, and had to be carried out of court. Then a dispute arose as to who should take care of her. The learned judge said she must be seen by no one connected with the case, and directed the governor of the jail to see that she had every requisite for the night. A medical gentleman was called, and he reported that it would be impossible for Miss Lyons to be examined further at present, and so the court had to be adjourned.—*English Paper*.

NOTE XI.

Many half informed Christian priests are still bold in the assertion that much, if not all, of ancient Pagan wisdom and morality was obtained directly or indirectly from Jewish sources; while eminent Christian scholars have been forced to admit that such could not possibly be the case. The ancient Jews were an ignorant, stupid and barbarous race, and any true enlightenment they had was mostly a reflection of that which had long previously existed among Pagan nations.

Barnes, in an endeavor to prove that the Bible came from God, and that it could not have been originated by illiterate Jews, says of that people: "The Bible came from a land undistinguished for literature—a land not rich in classical associations, a land not distinguished for pushing its discoveries into the regions of science. Chaldaea had its observatories, and the dwellers there looked out on the stars and gave them names; Egypt had its temples where the truths of science as well as the precepts of religion were committed to the sacred priesthood; Greece had academic groves; but Judea had neither. To such things the attention of the nation was never turned. We have all their literature, all their science, all their knowledge of art, and all this is in the Bible. Among the ancients they were regarded as a narrow-minded, a bigoted, a superstitious people."—*Lectures on Evidence of Christianity*, p. p. 257-8.

While the Jews were in this low condition, and ages before the compilation of the Bible had been attempted, many Pagan nations were in a highly intellectual state; and a Christian writer, Rev. Dr. Croker, honestly asserts that: "The statement of Justin Martyr and Tertullian, that Pagan philosophy borrowed from Jewish prophets and the supposition that Plato had access to a Greek version of the Old Testament in Egypt, are obviously mere suppositions by which over-zealous Christians sought to maintain the supremacy of the Scriptures. The travels of Pythagoras are altogether mythical, the mere invention of Alexandrian writers who believed that all wisdom

flowed from the East. That Plato visited Egypt at all rests on the single authority of Strabo, who lived at least four centuries *after* Plato, and there is no trace in his own works of Egyptian research. His pretended travels in Phœnicia where he gained from the Jews a knowledge of the true God, are more unreliable still. Plato lived in the fourth century before Christ, and there is no good evidence of the existence of a Greek version of the Old Testament before that of the Seventy made by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, B. C. 270. Jeremiah, the prophet of Israel, lived two centuries before Plato, consequently any personal interview between the two was simply impossible."—*Christianity and Greek Philosophy*, p. 476.

NOTE XII.

MUSCULAR CHRISTIANITY.

At a meeting held near Newry, the Rev. Mr. Stokes is reported to have observed that "It had been oddly proposed that some of the Protestant cathedrals should be handed over to the Roman Catholics: but he believed it was the feeling of 200,000 Orangemen of Ulster that if a single Protestant cathedral, Protestant church or Protestant parsonage-house in the most remote or distant part of Connaught or Munster was handed over to the apostate Church of Rome, they would know where to find cathedrals that were just as good as the cathedrals handed over. They know where to find the Roman Catholic cathedral of Armagh, and they felt that their 200,000 stout arms would be able to hold it. They would say to the pastors of every Protestant church that, before they gave it up to any apostate system, a barrel of gun-powder and a box of matches would send it to the winds of heaven." The Rev. Mr. Stokes is a fair type of the genuine orthodox Christian—one of those who valiantly supported Cromwell in his deeds of blood and devastation. Instead of "Resist not evil," our Rev. hero would struggle hard to crush those who preach any other religion than his, at least in his "House of God;" rather than forgive Christian brethren, the Rev. gentleman would retaliate by seeking to emulate the exploits of the memorable Guy Fawkes. This is muscular Christianity with a vengeance!—(*London National Reformer*)

NOTE XIII.

A late instance of the unfeeling manner in which clerical magistrates deal with poor working people in England, is related by a London correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, dated May 27, 1873.

It seems that in the town or village of Ascott in Oxfordshire, a Mr. H. refused to give to certain laborers—seventeen men—the wages they demanded, 14 shillings each—about \$3.50 per week—and so they quitted his work. He afterwards succeeded in hiring two men to work at his price, but in order to induce these men not to work for farmer H—, the wives of the seventeen men met them and, as farmer H— swore, tried to intimidate these men from going to work for him. He had these women brought before two reverend magistrates, who are priests of the State Church—the Rev. Mr. Harris, and the Rev. Mr. Carter, at Chipping Norton, a town some miles away from Ascott—and sixteen of the women were sentenced to prison with hard labor, nine of them for seven days, and seven of them for ten days. The women being too poor had no one to defend them, and

two of them had children infants at the breast. The correspondent says: "For the credit of England let me say that a sentence so brutal has shocked everybody. The papers are ringing with denunciations this morning."

Alluding to the magistrates in the case, the *Pall Mall Gazette* said: "Their interests and sympathies are all with the class, which in cases arising under the act is almost invariably with the prosecutor, and it will often happen that even the best of them will be under the influence of a feeling, which sees in a strike an outburst of wicked insubordination."

And the *London Times* said: "The conduct of these magistrates was deplorable, the disproportion of the punishment to the offence is altogether indefensible"—and it called upon the Lord Chancellor to remove these reverend tryants from the bench.

Subsequently the working people assembled, a riot ensued, the police station was attacked and much injury was done.

So great was the expression of public opinion at the outrage that the matter was afterward brought before Parliament.

NOTE XIV.

The "worldlings" of the Clerical gentry of the State Church has long been a public theme; but when a paper supposed to be in the interests of the Establishment publicly reflects upon the presumed defiance of its chief pastors, ordinary people will begin to enquire why such "gaitered chatterboxes" and "wind bags of the Episcopal bench" are yet retained and allowed to deplete the public treasury by annually drawing very large salaries for their "flummery, flattery, and platitudes." While many of their spiritual lordships are fond of display and keep up almost regal establishments, it seems that others of them, according to the "*Church Herald*" are "stingy, penurious, and grasping."

In a late issue the *London Church Herald* complimented the bishops in the following style:

"There never was a time when Bishops were so painfully commonplace and notoriously unremarkable." "Now we are blessed with popularity-hunting prigs, gaitered chatter boxes, flimsy scholars, smug vulgarians; men whose principles, whether good or bad, are so deeply buried in the dark recesses of their own consciousness that neither themselves nor anybody else have ever been able to find them out." Then it is asked:

"Who that had been present at the so-called 'Working-men's meetings' at our autumnal congresses have not felt a glow of shame suffuse his heart, and a blush of ignominy crimson his countenance, when listening to the soulless twaddle and degrading commonplace flowing out of episcopal mouths on such occasions? No high principle taught, no lofty and Divine truth inculcated, no distinctive Church doctrine set forth, no sins and shortcomings of working-men boldly and bravely rebuked. Flummery, flattery, and platitudes enunciated by the ever-talkative wind-bags of the episcopal bench. Does any sensible man think for one-half second that by such painful and degrading exhibitions, in which Bishops, both in matter and manner, are lowered to the low level of tub-orators, the Church of England is helped in any way, or the opposition of consistent religious opponents of that Church successfully bought off."

Here is another choice bit from the sketch of the "Bishop of the Period:"

"Cunning and clever, he keeps as chaplains lick-spittle creatures of the baser sort, who hoist moral storm signals to see which way the wind blows, or who act as clerical detectives in plain clothes, and inform his lordship of their earnest labors. The bishop only exercises hospitality when such work is absolutely essential, being stingy, penurious and grasping. With nauseous ostentation, owning £5,000 a year, he has cut down his household expenses, so as to save money and found a family. Butler, footman, and pages are not now at the palace. And a witty country wag libellously avers that the bishop is shaved by the lady's-maid. He rides to confirmations in a gig, or sometimes walks all the way in wet weather, taking care that one of his literary chaplain, privately informs some of the London newspapers of his truly humble and Christian spirit.

One would almost think these superfine gentlemen were talking about preachers in "Salem Chapel." See also a caustic article on Bishops in the *Edinburgh Review* for December, 1828.

NOTE XV.

From an English Paper.

A CURATE'S STORY.—The Rev. W. J. Shearley, M. A., incumbent of Christ Church, Henton, in the parish of Wookey, near Wells Somerset, has written a pamphlet which now lies before us. In it he describes what patronage has done for him, and how it works in his neighborhood. He discloses his personal history with unusual frankness—this, indeed, being necessary for the understanding of his case. He entered the ministry, he tells us, 'with honest intention and some zeal,' not being 'constrained to take orders for bread,' which is a happy thing; for, if he had done so, he must apparently starved on £100 a year. He took a degree at Cambridge in 1840, and then became vice-principal of a training college at Chester, where he married his present wife, 'by whom' he says, 'I have four sons and six daughters—blessed be God—all living.' But he must needs go into ministry; and after a couple of curacies in the diocese of Cheshire, he got a recommendation from the bishop to his present small incumbency, which had just been taken out of the parish of Wookey, and endowed with a stipend of £100 per annum. There was no minister's house, but he was accommodated with one in the out-parish of Wells, at the easy rent of £30, leaving £70 for himself and his growing family. He was commiserated by the neighboring clergy; but he set to work conscientiously, and for one and twenty years he has walked 'through the heats of summer and colds of winter' to look after his parishioners. There is a Dissenting chapel in the village, in which 'Bible Christians' hold services, and of these Mr. Shearley speaks respectfully, not denying that they have had a share in producing peace, order and religiousness in the place, but he modestly claims some credit also for himself.

On the 4th of July, the Vicar of Wookey died, and Mr. Shearley thought that after so many year's service he was justified in asking for the place. He had borne the heat and burthen of the day, and, 'looking upon the bishop as a trustee to administer his patronage as in the sight of God,' he at least expected that his claim would be seriously considered, and if rejected, 'yet courteously and indly, and

in the fear of God.' Nobody will accuse Mr. Shearley of unreasonableness. He wrote instantly to the bishop (the Vicar died on Saturday) and on Monday he transported himself, by aid of the train and a 'swift cab' to the bishop's town house in Queen Square, Westminster. His lordship's carriage was 'at the widely-opened door,' and the butler before it; but as soon as Mr. Shearley was seen approaching up the steps the door was slammed to in his face, but not before he had caught sight of the bishop, a lady, and his secretary in the hall. He shall tell the rest in his own words:—"I felt instinctively—being well known to the butler by sight—that my presence was a difficulty, and not till after some waiting I pulled the bell; then the butler appeared and said I could not see the bishop; then I asked to see Mr. Bernard, but no admission after a 150 miles travel, and to his credit, Mr. Bernard, who then appeared, seeming willing that I should see the bishop, but the butler reiterated no admission, by order of Dr. A, B, or C, and I was left on the door step. Mr. Bernard proposed that I should walk with him in the street, and then told me that an arrangement had been made some months since, as the report was Mr. Stuart intended resignation. Mr. Bernard said a letter was waiting for me, and I asked him to get it, as I might as well have the authoritative refusal without delay; he returned and brought letter A; that I was roughly treated no one can deny—left behind on the door-step, and the bishop, etc., etc., behind the door; knowing the probability of my early visit there seems to have been a determination to avoid seeing me, but I arrived at the very moment when my presence was embarrassing, and I was left to return to Wells with a bare and hard denial of a request considerate in its terms and reasonable in its character. Alas, alas! how weary—how heartsick! I had been used as I never used the poorest man. To get rid of me was the point; and to drive the suppliant curate of more than fifty years of age, and after twenty-one years' service, empty away in the fullest sense of the words, was the conjoint action of the screened assembly." The letter was brief. It ran thus:—"My dear Mr. Shearley,—I am extremely sorry to hear of Mr. Stuart's death. I regret that I am unable to promise the vacancy to you, having other arrangements in contemplation. Faithfully yours, AUCKLAND, BATH and WELLS." Mr. Shearley remonstrated by letter with his bishop for turning him away from his door with scant courtesy, when a rest of but ten minutes would have been welcome. He knew, he said, that it was impolite to write thus, but he had counted the cost. "I could not help thinking of the different way in which Christian people regard Christian courtesies." He himself invited a poor man with a wooden leg to take a ride in his fly as he was posting to the bishop—the bishop would not ask one of his own clergy as much as to sit down and rest in his hall! Four days afterward Mr. Shearley learned that the living of Wookey was given to the bishop's nephew. Mr. Shearley's experiences on this memorable 6th of July, seems to have brought him much light on many things. If such is the way in which the hardworking clergy are treated, "ought the patronage to remain where so much opportunity is afforded to hidden and adverse influences?" He begins to see that the "political exaltation of bishops and dignitaries has little affinity with the election of Matthias to the ministry apostleship, and the spiritual overseer seems often too

much cumbered with over-services to the demands of custom and requisitions of lordly state." It "may be also that cathedral establishments call for modification and rejuvenescence;" for, when "two of the best livings in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Wells" are given to young men not resident there for more than four or five years, we can but lament and wish it had not been thus".—[*English Independent.*]

NOTE XVI.

The sporting propensities of clergymen, particularly those of the State Church, have been publicly commented on a thousand times, and lest it might be asserted that certain clerical frailties introduced into this work are exaggerations, a few instances are given of some of the latest departures from "moral rectitude" on the part of some of the ordained "servants of the Lord." The following extracts are taken from the public papers; the list could be greatly extended and the names added of many erring priests and preachers of other denominations.

THE COOKS AND THE CLERGYMEN.

The London correspondent of the *New York World* says: Scandal-loving people have of late been feasted full of fat things, and during the last week they have been regaled with two unusually shocking cases, in which the delinquents were clergymen of the Church of England. Both of the cases were very similar; in each of them the rector of a village seduced one of his domestic servants and became the father of an illegitimate child; and in each of them the evidence disclosed a very remarkable and astounding condition of society among these pillars of the establishment. Of one of them I shall speak very briefly; the other demands a more extended comment. "The rector of Hardwicke," said the journals the other day, "was yesterday morning charged at Cambridge before the mayor and several other borough magistrates with being the father of the illegitimate child of Hannah Abrahams, former domestic servant at the rectory.

* * The hearing of the case occupied three hours, and the magistrates eventually made an order of 2s. 6d. per week." The other case, which was decided on Thursday in the Court of Arches, was a still worse one. The Rev. John Jackson, the rector of Ludbury, was charged before this ecclesiastical tribunal "with adultery with his cook, Elizabeth Parry, with indecent conduct toward his housemaid, Elizabeth Lane, and with being the father of the illegitimate child of Elizabeth Parry." The evidence of his guilt was perfectly conclusive; it also disclosed the fact that while the rector was seducing his cook his wife was carrying on a flirtation with the curate; and when the cook's child was born, the rector, his physician, his wife, and some of his friends tried to induce the cook to swear that the child was the son of a young man to whom she had been engaged, and who would have married her had she not yielded to the seductions of the parson. This is really a shocking picture of English clerical life. There is great anxiety just now among a certain class of weak-minded people to induce parliament to appoint a commission for the examination of convents; but it might seem that there was a more crying necessity for the examination of rectories. The Rev. John Jackson is a man advanced beyond the middle stage of life; he has been married 25 years; he has been in holy orders 30

years; and he has held the valuable living at Ludbury for 10 years. In January, 1868, his family consisted of the cook, the housemaid, two other servants, himself and wife, their son, and his tutor, a gentleman preparing for holy orders. Familiarities took place between the cook and the clergyman, and on four or five occasions he committed adultery with her. Some time afterward, however, she left the rectory, Mr. Jackson giving her a certificate of good character, and obtained service elsewhere, but in September she went to the rectory again and was there delivered of a child. Mr. Jackson gave her a small sum of money and sent her away after her confinement; but in October, Elizabeth appeared one fine Sunday morning in the church with the baby, while Mr. Jackson was performing service, held up the child and said in a loud voice, "Look at your daddy!" This produced a sad commotion; and a few days afterward the magistrates made an order that Mr. Jackson should pay to Parry 2s. 6d. a week for the support of the child. The Dean of the Court held that there could be no doubt whatever as to the guilt of Mr. Jackson in regard to any of the charges against him, and in delivering his judgment he made some very scathing remarks concerning him. "It is disgraceful," said the learned Dean, "when the master of an ordinary household avails himself of his authority and position to corrupt his female servants; but when that master is also a clergyman, the disgrace is greater and the consequences far more mischievous. The scandal which the defendant has inflicted upon the parish committed to his care appears to have taken deep root, and will not be easily eradicated. The defendant has done much to injure the cause of religion and to weaken the influence of the church of which he is a priest." But, as the original offense had been committed more than two years ago, it was barred by the statute of limitations, and it was only within the power of the Dean to pronounce a sentence of suspension *ab officio et beneficio* for five years. At the expiration of this period Mr. Jackson may return to his holy office, and again devote himself to the work of increasing the population of the parish.

An English clergyman, the Rev. V. H. Moyle, has been charged before the magistrate at Middlesborough, with having forged documents to the value of £22,000 in connection with an iron company in which he was a shareholder.

The clergymen of England seem to have a bottomless capacity for getting themselves into scrapes. A Rev. Dr. Hodgins has been summoned by his clerk, "for spitting in his face on Sunday evening just outside the church door." Mr. Stewart, a Liverpool rector, is at odds with his vestry for putting up an obnoxious cross, and at a vestry meeting there was almost a riot. The Vicar of Lundulph, owing to disagreements, finds his congregation reduced to three, and has been publicly told by one of his recalcitrant flock that "he talked nonsense," which wasn't a handsome thing for a sheep to say to his shepherd. When this congregation of Lundulph met on Easter Monday there was a row about matters and things in general, and especially concerning the sacramental wine. The Vicar declared that not enough had been provided for the celebration of the Eucharist. The church-warden pointedly responded that as only two persons had communicated during the past year, and he had sent a whole bottle to the vestry, he thought there must have been quite

enough and to spare. The response of the Vicar is not reported, but he must have been in a most unclerical passion.—*Canadian paper.*

NOTE XVII.

ATTACK UPON THE ARISTOCRACY.

(*From The London Beehive.*)

This monstrous evil—which caps all other social and political evils that afflict our country—has grown up and become hoary in its iniquities; plethoric with the wealth it has unjustly accumulated; and swollen out and overgrown with pride and insolent importance and no wonder when we consider that it has fattened and batted, and ground down and oppressed the people of these realms for eight hundred years and upward. It had its origin—as most people know—in that great buncaneering raid which William of Normandy made upon this country in 1066, aided by soldiers and priests and a host of dissipated adventurers which he gathered from all parts of Europe by his offers of plunder; and who were filled with fiery zeal for the conquest of our unhappy country by a bull from the Pope, a consecrated banner, and a ring said to contain a hair of St. Peter. With this united band of fighting adventurers, priests, and monks, William succeeded in overcoming our Saxon ancestors; and, after having established and consolidated his power in confiscating, pillaging, burning, and destroying in all directions, he finally parcelled out the land of the country among his rapacious followers, the noble-blooded ancestors of our hereditary aristocracy. Not that the line of this noble blood has been preserved unbroken; for very many families of them have risen, and fallen, and sunk into oblivion; so that most of our present nobility have been very recent creations; yet from this plundering origin our hereditary aristocracy sprung. The Conqueror, however, wanted power and means to sustain him in possession of his throne and spoils; and hence, in parcelling out the estates of the country, he granted them on feudal tenure; that is, he granted them conditionally, that the holders should pay him service and tribute of various kinds, such as military service, or being compelled to arm themselves and their tenantry in support of the government when requested by the king; as also to pay certain fines or sums of money, under the names of aids, reliefs, wardships, &c., which were, as Blackstone says, “in the nature of a modern land-tax.” The money raised from this source, and from the crown lands, or the estates the king kept for himself, constituted at that time the only revenue of the kingdom; for the people then paid no taxes, they being serfs or laborers,

This, then, was the origin of our landed aristocracy: men who were bound by their tenures to defend the country, and to meet the expenses of the nation, in return for the vast benefits they enjoyed: that of sharing among them the greater portion of the land of the country. They subsequently succeeded, however, in getting their military service commuted for money; but this, and various other payments they were compelled to make, and continued to pay down to the time of the restoration of Charles II., when the Convention Parliament entered into an agreement with him, that he should free them from all the landed obligations, which they had hitherto paid for their estates, and that they would present him and his successors

with an excise law. In other words, that he would enable them, for this boon, to shift the burden from their own shoulders on to those of the people. Having thus, for their own selfish ends, cut off the principal source of revenue, and having subsequently cajoled our rulers out of the chief portion of the crown lands, there were no means for the carrying on of the government; so that in the reign of William the Third they were under the necessity of imposing a land-tax of four shillings in the pound on the full annual value of land. This, however, was too good a thing to be continued, and our aristocracy now managed to shirk, or to render it almost a nullity; for in 1798 they passed a law declaring that "the land-tax should only be levied on the original assessment of William the Third." So that, taking into account the large increase in the value of land, the tax does not now amount to a farthing in the pound; for, if it were assessed at its present value, at four shillings in the pound it would realize a sum of upwards twenty-five millions; whereas, the land-tax raised in 1868 amounted to only £1,092,693. But in the interim the Excise duties, which they imposed on the people, have increased from about a million to upwards of twenty millions, and the customs and all other public burdens, to a total of 69½ millions. With the possession of the land they have possessed the control over the tenantry, and the power of returning to what ought to be the people's house, the majority of their own tools and mouth pieces, to do their bidding, and to crush or retard all measures made by the friends of the people in favor of retrenchment or reform.

The possession of this power to pack the House of Commons, has placed the State also at their disposal, and most of its offices have been filled by our aristocracy or their nominees; and fierce and savage have been their attacks upon the few outsiders who have lately obtained possession of places in the ministry. The Church, too, has ever been a creature and tool of their own, and its bishops and clergy, their brethren or relations, or their own nominees or slavish dependants; for, in addition to the vast estates of the Church which at different times they have shared among the laity, they have now 6,950 Church livings to bestow on whom they choose, and about nine or ten millions of Church revenue to divide between the persons they elect. The clergy and aristocracy have always got all the charities of England under their control, amounting to above nineteen millions sterling. The army and navy also, are for the most part ruled and officered by them; and all efforts to reduce the enormous sum of about twenty-eight millions paid annually to support them, and strenuously opposed by the numerous representatives of these two services found in both Houses of Parliament.

In fact, the aristocracy have ruled our country for centuries, have divided all places of profit or honor between the two factions of them; have shared among themselves and tools the greater portion of the revenue; have warred against freedom at home and abroad; have ever been the opponents of all measures for the political and social elevation of our people, and have contracted an enormous debt which now bows down the industrial energies, and limits the trade and commerce, of the country. To use the words of General Foy, when he gave a definition of aristocracy in the French Chambers some years ago: "They are the league and coalition of those who

wish to consume without producing, live without working, occupy all public places without becoming competent to fill them, and seize upon all honors without meriting them."

We ask, then, whether it is not opposed to right and justice and the happiness of the nation, that an exclusive and privileged few should claim possession of the whole land of the country?—should have the power of preventing it from being properly cultivated by refusing some security of tenure? should hold large portions of it waste, or convert it into hunting "grounds and game" preserves? should have power to clear it of its human inhabitants at pleasure? and make the tenantry that hold and cultivate in their political slaves?

We further ask whether the principle of hereditary right is not a manifest injustice? as it gives a foolish son a right to succeed a wise father, and to thwart by his obstinacy or folly the most just and righteous measures that the best and wisest of our legislators may propose for the security, enlightenment, prosperity, and progress of the nation.

If our brethren concur with us in opinion, that our hereditary aristocracy has been, and continues to be, a blight and a curse upon our country, is it not high time to use every political power they possess to free themselves from its withering influence? Is it not time to meet, urge, petition, and beseech our representatives to do away with the monstrous evils primogeniture and entail, and compel our aristocracy to do justice to all their children? To limit by law the quantity of land that should be held by individuals; and to cause their immense estates to be divided among their children on the death of the possessors? To end, also, the slavish custom of the representatives of the whole nation having every measure of importance for the well being of the country frustrated by a non-represented and privileged few, they should enact that any law passed twice through the House of Commons should become the law of the land, whatever other power in the State may be opposed to it.

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[From *The Chicago Tribune*, July 11th, 1874.]

We merely premise that Mr. Ingersoll is an apostle of rationalism and that he has used the opportunity afforded by these lectures to define and defend his creed with the energy, courage, and ardor of his nature.

[From *The Chicago Times*, July 5th, 1874.]

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Col. Ingersoll is a man in earnest. He is a man of power. The rarest gifts bountiful nature now and then bestows on mortals, seldom more than one at a time, she has showered on him in profusion. As an orator, he stands probably without an equal in the land: as a writer, considering that close application to the law has given him little opportunity for practice, he is almost equal to himself as an orator: and this is in the most comprehensive sense, for his efforts present a rare combination of force, pure diction, poetical imagery, comprehensive and incisive reasoning, and a logic that is inexorable. But what gives most character to his style, and constitutes its greatest charm, is its suggestiveness. Mr. Ingersoll never exhausts a subject. His lectures are strings of epigrams.

No writer of the day hits error, or what he conceives to be error, so squarely between the eyes. Albeit one may not agree with him—and the present writer is far from doing so in many things—it is a comfort at any time to find a man who utters what he thinks, and it is a pleasure at all times to find it done well.

That the book will have an immense sale is little to be doubted, and it is said that the first edition, a large one, was exhausted by orders coming in from all parts of the country, before it left the printer.

[From the *Earlville (Ill.) Transcript*, July 9th, 1874.]

Everybody should read these lectures. It is not too much to say that they are among the ablest contributions to Free Religious literature ever published.

FURTHER NOTICES FROM THE PRESS.

[From *The Chicago Journal*, July 3d, 1874.]

One of the most superbly gotten-up books we have seen for many a day. This book belongs to a class of publications which challenges attention by boldness and strength. Every sentence is brilliant with the light of genius and based on sincerity. It is probably the most radical book to be found in the whole range of theology.

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The lecture on Humboldt shows a great wealth of knowledge, and a profound appreciation of what science has done for the world. It abounds in sublime tributes and lofty generalizations.

The dominant idea of this volume is: Belief should rest on evidence.

Very many of the more radical thinkers of the day strike at the moral convictions and virtues on which civilization is built. It is a hopeful sign, that while Mr. Ingersoll is an iconoclast of the most pronounced type, he is conservative in everything pertaining to morality and sociology.

[From *The Cincinnati Commercial*, July 11th, 1874.]

Robert G. Ingersoll, of Illinois, is recognized as one among the most brilliant of radical speakers and writers: and he is very radical, as any one who has read his lecture on "The Gods," well knows. He does not mince matters. He discusses theological questions from a rational point of view. He ignores the supernatural, and builds upon the foundation of reason, observation, and experience. He takes the ground that man belongs to himself, must maintain his intellectual freedom, and reject every religion that demands a sacrifice of his individuality.

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[From *The Inter-Ocean*, July 11th, 1874.]

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